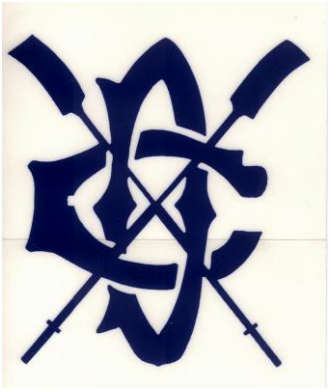
DOLPHIN LOG

Collection, Year 2025

The Bulletin of the
Dolphin Swimming & Boating Club
San Francisco, Established 1877



Dolphin Swimming & Boating Club
502 Jefferson Street
San Francisco, CA 94109

DOLPHIN LOG

The Bulletin of the San Francisco Dolphin Swimming & Boating Club | Spring 2025 | Established 1877

Left to Right: Karen Drucker, Susan Cobb, Carol McGrath, Joni Beemsterboer, Lisa Smith, Susan Allen

In 1989, six Dolphin women became the first all-female team from the United States to successfully swim the English Channel

Dolphin Log

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Officers

President: John Hornor

Vice President: Ken Coren

Treasurer: Tim McElligott

Recording Secretary: David Zovickian

Membership Director: Janine Corcoran

House Captain: Tim Kreutzen

Boat Captain: Maile Smith

Board of Governors

Diane Walton, Polly Rose, Ben Chun, Stu Gannes, Nanda Palmieri, Nathaniel Berger, John Robiola, Chloe Nooan

Club Manager: John Ingle

Asst. Club Manager: Brendan Sheehan

Our own print of photograph 190011!

No Permission Required!

by Morgan Kulla

The Dolphin Club has an extensive collection of archival material and fascinating memorabilia that continues to grow. Here are some recent additions.

Many members know the iconic image of Dolphin members at the Van Ness boathouse c. 1900, standing under the sign that is now hanging over our bar. The framed print that hangs on the west wall of the main boathouse is in fact a copy of an original in the Maritime Museum Library. All prints of this image in our Archives had been purchased from and credited to that library. But now we have our own original, thanks to a donation. Ours is in good shape, apart from some damage at two corners. You can view it in the Archives online, Photograph 190011.

A few months ago, our original arrived in a bubble mailer with only a return address. When I tracked down the donor I asked – as I always do – how she acquired the photograph. From her story and our research, we tracked down the Dolphin connection. In the 1920s, the donor's father lived for a time at the San Francisco home of an uncle, Thomas J. Kennedy, who was a Dolphin Club member until his death in 1914. The photo ended up with the donor's father, then with her. Kennedy is in a large 1902 photo panel of Club members, hanging in the stairway. He was a two-term state senator 1906-1910 and a supporter of extreme eugenics, according to his obit. But that's another story.

Other donations include two lovely small silver trophy cups in the trophy cabinet. Their stories also reveal Dolphin connections and history. One cup, Artifact 389, was given to charter member A.P Rothkopf when he became a life member in 1902. He re-gifted it, with an added inscription, to the infant son of a friend in 1928. It was passed to the baby's brother, then to the donor. The Archives has several photos of Rothkopf. The other cup, Artifact 390, has a surprise double Dolphin connection. It was awarded to Frank Kelly, who won the cup in the 1932 Golden Gate Swim, and was donated by the niece of life member Herb Madden, Jr.

We also received donations from members, including two photo albums by Susan Lauritzen and John Perino's negatives of members and activities in the 1990s and early 2000s.

The Archives welcomes donations of materials with historic significance to the Dolphin Club. It is essential that all donations include the name/contact info of the donor, as well as information on how the material was acquired. As you see, the story of a photo or an artifact is also a piece of Club history!

Check out all these donations at *https://hub.catalogit.app/375*

Commissioners:

Swimming

Swim Commissioners: Alex Kroeger, Lindsay Stripling, Ben Chun
Check-in: Eric Shupert **Clean-up:** Steve Carlson **Clothes Wrangling:** Janine Corcoran **Swim Trinkets:** Margaret Keenan **Timing:** Janice Wood, Emily Nogue, Tamar Besson **Galley Captain:** Alix Marduel **Swim Clinic Director:** Diane Campbell

Rowing

Wooden Fleet Commissioner: Nanda Palmieri
Lake Merced Captain: Jim Storm, Rachael Perry
Kayak Training: Nathaniel Berger, Terry Horn
Motorized Fleet Commissioner & Chief Pilot: Nathaniel Berger **Non-Motorized piloting:** Terry Horn **Shell Training:** James Dilworth, Gabby Wong **Learn to Row:** Dominic Lusinchi, **Grizzly Challenge:** Zack McCune
SUP Training: Raine O'Connor, Gary Leong
Boat Shop: Jon Bielinski, Julia Hechanova

Other Athletics

DC/SERC TRI Captain: Ward Bushee
EFAT: Gina Rus **Handball Captain:** Brendan Managhan **Running Commissioner:** Trina Garry
Weight Room Captain: Deborah Sherwood

Lockers

Women's Captain: Crissa Williams
Men's Captain: David Zovickian

Open Invitation to Weekly Boat Shop

by Diane Walton

Paella a la Rafael Marañón. Nicolas Tomasevic with plate. (Sharon Wong)

Have you been in the Boat Shop lately? Or should I say yet? Boat Shop sessions are a wondrous way to develop skills in boat building and repair. They help you develop an intimate relationship with the profound wooden heritage of the Dolphin Club. Members and non-members are all welcome. Whether you are a rower, a swimmer, a runner, a handball player, or a weight room aficionado, feel free to bring your friends and family to work under the guidance of professional boat builders. There is no guest fee for Boat Shop paricipants.

The Boat Shop sessions occur every Tuesday. The sessions currently rotate between an evening session the first and third Tuesdays of the month; and a day session on the second and fourth Tuesdays. Day sessions run from 10am to 1pm with a lunch afterwards. Evening sessions run from 5pm to 8pm with a meal preceding at 4pm. You can send an email to *boatshop@dolphinclub.org*; check the calendar on the boat shop door; consult the groups.io calendar (*https://dolphinclub.groups.io/g/main/calendar*); or just come on in!

The Boat Shop was converted from our second handball court into a boat shop over 75 years ago. The conversion fostered the goals of promoting ongoing on-site maintenance of the fleet, building of new boats, and engendering member and community connection to the traditions of our city and our bay through our historical wooden vessels. Some of the earliest rowers made their living rowing out to the incoming ships, bringing the ship's cargo to market, and it sounds like some of them made hay as they raced on the Bay on their off days. Rowers were key San Francisco waterfront players. Later, you see local news carrying our race results, with champion rowers Lawton Hughes and Tom Troneum often featured. Today, piloting as well as recreational and competitive rowing—whether solo, duo, or group—bring challenges and smiles to our rowers and scullers.

We look forward to an ever-growing number of hands to tend our boats; to share our slice of history; to venerate those early waterfront days; and to be a part of today's wooden boat building community in the Bay Area. There are a number of examples of this community outreach and interaction. The Dolphin Club Foundation, in keeping with its purposes, has been supporting community education through our partners, such as the Spaulding boat building programs. Those students have come to our boat shop to see the professionals, Jon Bielinski and Julia Hechanova, in action. Several Club members have been to visit Rocking the Boat at India Basin Waterfront Park, and we look forward to more interaction and having them return the visit later this year. And of course, we support our friends in the Small Craft workshop on Hyde Street Pier. I hope to see the Sala Burton Maritime Museum, the San Francisco Historical Society and others showcase wooden boat building this year. All will be good fun and learning, and the best place to be will still be our Boat Shop!

Boat Shop Schedule Board . (Sharon Wong)

Jon Bielinski (Sharon Wong)

Jon Bielinski & Diane Walton (Sharon Wong)

Laura Morton sanding (Sharon Wong)

Club House

Gardens: Susanne Friedrich, Andy Stone
Deck Landscape: Steve Krolik
Green Team: Janice Wood

Social

Entertainment Commish: Robin Rome
Club Mixer: Todd Bloch, Davis Ja
Joe Illick Forum: Krist Jake, Stuart Gannes
Ukulele Club: Carolyn Hui

Communications

Facebook: James Dilworth **Groups.io:** Ward Bushee
Instagram: Mackenzie Kirk, Anne Hamersky
Twitter/Mastodon: Nancy Friedman
2000 Stories: Julie Marcus
Website Manager: Laura Croome

Lost & Found

Club & Women's Locker Room: Piper Murakami
Men's Locker Room: Hal Offen

Other

Volunteer Coordinator: Denise Sauerteig
Dolphin Foundation: Anthony DuComb
DC Youth Swim Fund: Laura Zovickian
Government: Ken Coren, Diane Walton
Renovation Committee: John Hornor, Peter van der Sterre **Save Aquatic Park Pier:** Diane Walton
Swag: John Ingle, Brendan Sheehan, Maile Smith

Dolphin Women Set a Record That Will Never Be Broken

by Larry Scroggins

At the 30th anniversary swim celebration wearing t-shirts designed by Lisa Smith listing the Channel swim hazards. Left to Right: Susan Allen, Lisa Smith, Susan Cobb-Frederick, Carol McGrath, Joni Beemsterboer, Karen Drucker. (Photo by John Frederick)

First All-Women, All-American English Channel Relay Team in History (and all-Dolphin)

Records, the saying goes, are made to be broken. This certainly applies to Dolphin Club athletic feats: Fastest, slowest, youngest, oldest, longest, farthest. Every one of these records has been broken repeatedly—and sometimes shattered. One distinction, however, can never be eclipsed: The first to do something will always and forever be first. In 1989, six Dolphins became the first American all-woman team to successfully swim the English Channel. They also happened to set a record of 10 hours, 54 minutes for fastest "All Women's Relay Swim" that year. "Had there not been a deterioration of conditions," says Andy Vernon, the crossing's official observer, "I believe that the San Francisco Women Swimmers would have broken the record of 10 hours thirty-two minutes." Regardless, they will be the first American women's relay until the end of time.

The idea to swim the English Channel and the core of the team formed in Hawaii. When the whole team came together it consisted of six Dolphins: Lisa Smith, Karen Drucker, Joni Beemsterboer, Susan Cobb-Frederick, Susan Allen, and Carol McGrath. The idea to attempt a Channel relay bubbled up over cocktails in Lahaina, Maui. In this oral history of the swim, the women recount the story of their precedent-setting achievement.

Karen: I just remember margaritas and pina coladas being involved. Lisa and I had just swum the Maui Channel and after that, you go and do the Waikiki Rough Water swim.

Lisa: Susan Allen was always in charge of these swims. We did the Honolulu marathon every year even if we didn't run it.

Susan Allen: I wasn't in charge. I was just following Conrad von Blankenburg. Morgan Kulla was the one.

Karen: After our swims, we were just sitting around toasting ourselves and someone threw out, 'What's next for you girls?' Somebody suggested the English Channel and by the time the last cocktail came, we were going, "Let's check it out!" Lisa, when she got back to the office on Monday, immediately wrote to the English Channel commission, or whatever it was, to find out what the story was in terms of how you do it.

Lisa: I belonged to the Olympic Club and I knew some people there were trying to put together a relay, and I wasn't interested in doing it with them. I thought, "I can put a team together. I'm a manager type." I wrote the letters to the Channel Swimming Association and learned what was required.

Karen: The little lady there wrote back and said, "Well, if you girls do it, you'll be the very first American women to do it." After that, Lisa and I just looked at each other and said, "Who would be fun to do this with?"

Susan Cobb: This was in the days way before email. It was fax machines and regular mail. Lisa did this stuff. We got a big packet in the mail from the CSA. The communication part of this was not easy.

Joni: I remember Lisa calling me and saying, "I'm trying to put

this team together." At the time, I had already committed to another team, but the idea of being the first American women to successfully make a crossing really appealed. So, I said, "If I can get myself replaced, I'm in. What's the requirement?" And Lisa said, "That you be faster than me."

Susan Cobb: She didn't tell me that, which was lucky!

Carol: I hadn't been swimming for six months, and somebody asked if I was interested in joining the team. I think it was Joni. I said sure, and I guess I need to be getting in the water and practicing a little bit.

Lisa: I remember thinking, "I've gotta get fast. I've gotta get fast. And then realizing—I'm not going to get fast." But I was strong. I've always been strong. I could do long distance triathlons. I could just never swim fast.

Karen: I think Carol was our fast one. I remember that she was going into the Bay two or three times a day, and I was thinking we have to get this gal. She's fast and she's committed.

Joni: That contributed to the notion of a team and not wanting to disappoint.

Lisa: It was always just the six of us, and no one dared get sick or quit. We were all Dolphins. Peer pressure.

Karen: That's a really good point. I remember even when I was swimming and thinking, "this is really hard." But when there's a team. You're thinking, "I don't want to be the one. I don't want to be the one to get sick or quit or whatever." And so that team spirit is what kept us all going and committed. My swimming got so much better because now I had a purpose.

For a warmup, five members of the team decided to undertake the Byron Cup swimming challenge, an annual event commemorating Lord Byron's legendary 1822 swim across the Bay of Poets. Many swimmers register to swim the 7.5 kilometers between Portovenere and Lerici in northern Italy. While Susan Allen dined in France, the remaining five relay team members met fellow Dolphin and renowned San Francisco restaurateur Modesto Lanzone in La Spezia for the swim and a magnificent dinner afterwards.

Lisa: The trip to Italy was a hoot. We had a lot of fun.

Karen: How in the world did we get the crazy idea to go to Italy beforehand? Was that you Joni?

Joni: I think it was, but it was really Modesto who tantalized me with the idea of swimming from Port Venere to Lerici which was about five miles—but it was rough water.

Karen: Oh! The jet skis!

Susan Cobb: It was a holiday and there were a lot of drunk people in the water. (Not us.)

Karen: They did their boats the way they did their driving in the streets. Was that a relay? We swam five miles??? Did we even have pilot boats?

Joni: Because of the chaotic conditions, we all got separated. Modesto was in a boat, and Carol and I stayed with him.

Carol: The one thing that stood out for me was how terribly salty the water was. All I wanted was to drink something, and there was nothing to be had but oranges or something.

Joni: Our water bottles landed in another boat. Modesto tossed us a peach which we shared, Carol and I, passing it back and forth. I still remember how terrific it tasted. Back in La Specia, Modesto treated all of us to a lavish Italian dinner served *al fresco*.

About a week later, all six women rendezvoused in England for the channel swim. Their pilot was Willie Richardson, and their boat was the Stumark III. Like almost all Channel swims, they started from Shakespeare Beach, a rocky stretch on the Dover coast. The start time was 5:46 on the morning of August 24, 1989. The skipper apparently had an English sense of humor.

Karen: The pilot had some kind of a hammer or something and said, "I don't know. The engine hasn't been working great. I'm not sure we're going to make it." That was a good one.

Joni: It felt to me that when we started out, these guys didn't think we were going to make it. Frankly, they get paid if you go a mile or if you go the distance. But at some point—around half—they began to realize, "Oh wait a minute. We might be taking the first American women across!" And I felt their attitude change slightly.

Carol: What were these signs that they were skeptical?

Joni: That we were women. That we were from another country. That we didn't know what we were doing.

Susan Allen: A lot of people were trying to swim the channel there and had never trained like we had trained in open water. And when they found out that we knew how to handle open water like we do, they realized that we were going to make it, for Christ's sake!

Carol: Well, I was on land because I was the first, but my recollection was that [the crew] was very kind. They just didn't quite get why we were all so seasick. They were just impervious. I remember being seasick the whole time except for when I swam.

Karen: I remember we were in our own little worlds. You'd do your swim and then you'd get into your sleeping bag or whatever and no one was talking to each other. I was swimming my turn and thinking, "Oh god, Isn't Joni just the best! She's coming over to support me and then blech."

Susan Cobb: I have a picture of Joni throwing up.

Carol: I think the pilots were cooking fish or something god-awful below and offering us food. The thought of it was blech. No thank you. How can you guys eat right now on this boat?

Susan Cobb: I think they were eating something like fried spam.

Joni: They would walk from one place to another and cross our paths with this bucket of whatever it was they were eating and it was so awful.

Carol: I could barely understand them because they had an English brogue or cockney or something like that.

Karen: All I remember of the food on board was digestives. I loved those. Digestives and GU are what got me across.

Lisa: Digestives were really just cookies, but we thought they were health food and we ate a bunch of them.

Carol: It was a bright, sunny day and we were all just huddled up in clothes. Those blue long coats we had.

Susan Allen: Sweatshirts, caps, slippers. Everything.

Susan Cobb: I have the observer's report. The air temperature was between 56 and 58. The sea temperature went between 64 and 66. The wind force started at 2 and went to 4/5.

Those numbers refer to the Beaufort scale, developed by Britain's Admiral Sir Francis Beaufort in 1805 to help sailors estimate the winds via visual observations. The scale starts at 0 and goes to a force of 12. A Force 2 is a light breeze, which forms ripples with the appearance of scales. The crests have a glassy appearance and do not break. At Force 4/5, the wind is a moderate to fresh breeze that causes small trees in leaf to sway. The water forms moderate waves with many white horses (breaking waves or white caps that appear when the wind blows.) These were the conditions that led the observer, Andy Vernon, to cite deteriorating conditions as costing the team an historical all-women crossing record.

The team completed the swim at 4:40 in the afternoon when Susan Cobb stepped ashore on the beach near Calais. This allowed the team to at least set the all-woman record for that year.

Lisa: I was in the little dinghy just in case I had to be the last swimmer. So, I did get to touch France.

Susan Cobb: You take three steps out of the water and then you just swim back to the boat. I think we were pretty tired. Pictures showed us all with sunburned faces.

Karen: And then we all felt like, "OK. Yay! We did it!" And then you have something like three hours back. They're just hightailing it back. It felt like someone was taking a bucket of water and just throwing it on us for three hours. We're just hanging on for dear life.

Carol: I do remember the boat ride home, I was wondering, "Are we ever going to get there?" It was so choppy and dark and I just wanted to get back to the other side. It took an eternity in my head. It was a harrowing ride home.

Joni: I think the pilots were full throttle. They were like, "BANG!"

Susan Allen: We were singing show tunes—West Side Story.

Karen: When we got back, you'd think that there should be like fireworks or something going on at the other end. No one had thought about bringing cab money and we had to walk all the way back to our rooms. We're stumbling like drunken sailors because we'd been on the rocking boat for so long.

Joni: When we arrived back in England there was this little tour group in a bus. Someone told them what we'd done and they started clapping for us.

Karen: I remember taking a shower first and it was one of those metal showers and everyone was in the room. I was just banging against the shower because I was so wobbly.

Lisa: We got back and partied. I don't think we were tired. I know I wasn't. We went out and ate and drank.

Susan Cobb: We went to an Italian restaurant, probably the only good restaurant in Folkestone.

Almost 36 years later, each member of the first all-American all-Women's Channel relay team vibrates with the memories they made that August day. They share a bond of great pride and enduring friendship born in the achievement of a record that can never be broken—and the fun they had doing it.

Karen and Lisa with Swag

Left to Right: Karen Drucker, Susan Cobb-Frederick, Joni Beemsterboer, Lisa Smith, Susan Allen, Carol Mcgrath

Editor's Note

The Dolphin Log offers heartfelt appreciation to Keith Howell, editor emeritus, for his years of dedication and service to the Dolphin Club since 2006. He was a distinguished steward for this publication. Thanks also go to Janice Wood who continues in her role as proofreader. The Log welcomes Mark Robinson as Contributing Editor.

Dolphins with 50 Years Or More of Continuous Membership

Left to Right: Randy Pinetti, Jim Hulihan, Mike Garibaldi, Stan Hylynsky. Photo by Colin Gift

Members Recently Reaching the 25 Year Milestone

All photos courtesy of Colin Gift except Joe Mannion courtesy of Larry Scroggins

Kevin Boden 2000

Tom Davis 1999

John Ottersberg 2000

Napthali (Hal) Offen 2000

Ted Tiles 2000

Joe Mannion 2000

Not pictured: Tom Alderson, Christopher Elginsmith, Rachel Elginsmith, Adam Engleskirchen, Agustin Huneeus

Old Timer Crab Dinner

All photos courtesy of Vicki Stolberg

Keith Howell and Stu Gannes

Plenty of Crab

Duke Dahlin

Mark Lenz and Peter Cullinan

Morgan Kulla and Mike Garibaldi

Naphtali Offen and Heidi Howell

LIFE MEMBERS 2025

Photo by Colin Gift

Dolphin Club Swim Results—Spring 2025

NYD Alcatraz—January 01, 2025

The Dolphin Club and SERC ran independent New Year's Day swims this year, and all were treated to a beautiful first sunrise.

Place	Swimmers Name	Swim Time	LCP
1	Allison Arnold	25:02	10
2	Felicia Lee	25:03	9
3	Dominick Kirk	30:26	8
4	Steve Schatz	31:28	7
5	Miranda Rouse	32:25	6
6	Charlie Putnam	32:44	5
7	Mackenzie Kirk	32:50	4
8	Bill Gardner	33:25	3
9	Juliet Cox	33:52	2
10	Jeff Citron	33:54	1
11	David Holscher	34:45	
12	Jean Lelu	35:52	
13	Heather Kramer	36:54	
14	D Neilson	36:59	
15	Sean Lavelle	37:12	
16	F.A.	37:18	
17	Randy Edwards	37:22	
18	John Gibbon	37:28	
19	Mike Hokenson	37:56	
20	Tom Brown	38:04	

Place	Swimmers Name	Swim Time	LCP
21	Elsbeth Farmer	38:07	
22	Heather Warm	38:26	
23	David O'Reilly	38:29	
24	Paul Kratowski	38:42	
25	Joe Ferrero	38:58	
26	Mitch Wiltick	39:44	
27	Ernst Halperin	39:47	
28	Mickey Lavelle	39:51	
29	Elizabeth Meyer	40:00	
30	Gary Arabatyan	40:40	
31	Brandon Esenther	40:57	
32	Danny DeLeon	40:57	
33	Ted Tilles	40:59	
34	Tom Neill	40:41	
35	Joe Spalone	42:00	
36	Karen Christensen	43:20	
37	Kathleen Duffy	45:34	
38	Robin Hart	47:24	
39	Andy Stone	49:24	

Pilots

Lead Pilot: Nathaniel Berger/Lead Swim Commissioner: Lindsay Stripling

Tom McCall, Grant Mays, Charmaine Leonard, Ally Sillins, Jeffrey Tong, Diane Jackson, George Chamales, Tony Foe, Dave Nettell, Dominic Lusinchi, Barry Christian, John Bellinski, Streitman, Dave Zovician, Terry Horn, Sunny Mckee, Jen Bruursema, Brian Kieran, Anthony Ducomb, Susan Allen, Amanda Stone, Jeff Kennedy, Eric Shackelford, Dolores Meehan, Margaret Keenan, Lissi Knell, Maggie Lonergan, Mikhail Melnikov, Daniel Marshall, Nathaniel, Diane Walton, Abby Mohan, Marci Glazer, Lindsay Stripling, David Buchanan, Maile Smith, Sharon Wong, Tim McElligott, Michael Tschanz-Hahn

Volunteers

Peter Cullinan, Felicia Lee, Tom Neil, Allison, Arnold, Tommy Dowley, Chloe Noonan, Bill Love, Juliet Cox, Eric Wind, Alix Murdel, Margaret Keenan, Dawn Holley, Maeve Lavelle, Lawrence Remstedt, DJ Niccolls, Claire Perry, Derrick Rebello, Emily Nogue, Diane Campbell, Holly Gassier, Beth Stein, Claire Trepanier, Joni Beemsterboer, Helen Bourdeaux, Eva Adamson, Liam Ronan, Farrah Spott, Dave Holmes-Kinsella

Test Swim

Nathaniel Berger, Lindsay Stripling, David Buchanan, Ally Sillins, Diane Jackson, Dominic Lusinchi, Peter Cullinan, Michael Tschanz-Hahn

Pier 41—February 2, 2025

Some light rain did not stop 50 Dolphin Club swimmers from making quick work of this classic early-season club swim. Thanks to the Blue & Gold Fleet for use of their dock, and to all the volunteers and pilots who made the swim possible.

Place	Name	Swim time	LCP
1	Allison Arnold	19:11	10
2	Felicia Lee	19:27	9
3	Henry Saunders	21:47	8
4	Mackenzie Kirk	22:11	7
5	Lauren Brinkmeyer	22:44	6
6	Travis Bickham	22:50	5
7	Miranda Rouse	23:30	4
8	Nick Dolce	23:35	3
9	Bill Gardner	23:47	2
10	Steve Schatz	24:02	1
11	Jeff Citron	24:03	
12	Chris Kelly	24:52	
13	Christophe Crombez	24:55	
14	Emily Ozer	26:10	
15	Ben Hu	26:53	
16	Anna Schatz	26:58	
17	Henry Rogers	27:57	
18	Heather Kremer	28:01	
19	Barnaby Payne	28:24	
20	Heather Warm	28:42	
21	Kristofer Milonas	28:47	
22	Don Thornburg	29:16	
23	Lawrence Remstedt	29:52	
24	Virginie Eskenazi	29:53	
25	Ernst Halperin	29:59	

Place	Name	Swim time	LCP
26	Henry Dombey	30:08	
27	Mickey Lavelle	30:10	
28	Tom Bernard	30:16	
29	David O'Reilly	30:22	
30	Tony Payne	31:08	
31	Brandon Esenther	31:27	
32	Morgan Kulla	31:56	
33	George Morris	32:21	
34	Lindzy Bivings	34:02	
35	Laure Darcy	34:52	
36	Damian Guenzing	36:16	
37	Elizabeth Ozer	36:28	
38	Marlin Gilbert	37:05	
39	Ken Coren	37:44	
40	Wafaa Sabil	38:01	
41	John Hornor	38:42	
41	Mike Thoresen	38:42	
43	Holly Reed	39:29	
44	Kathleen Duffy	39:52	
45	Anne Hamersky	40:18	
46	Hal Offen	41:32	
46	Joni Beemsterboer	41:32	
48	Kati Hopman	43:53	
49	Robin Rome	45:07	
50	Carolyn Hui	45:26	

Swim Results Spring 2025, cont.

Pilots

Lead Pilot: Tim Kreuzten / Lead Swim Commissioner: Ben Chun

Eliana Agudelo, Nathaniel Berger, Jon Bielinski, Dave Buchanan, Mark Caplan, Paul Chong, Karin Christensen, Ben Chun, KC Crowell, James Dilworth, Amanda Ernzer, Elspeth Farmer, Lewis Haidt, Diane Jackson, Brian Kiernan, Tim Kreutzen, Alex Kroeger, Tiffany Landee, Maeve Lavelle, Charmaine Leonard, Dominic Lusinchi, Tom McCall, Tim McElligott, Don Osborne, Nanda Palmieri, Ellie Reiff, Antoine Roux, Anne Sasaki, Denise Sauerteig, Maile Smith, Pete Strietmann, John Thorpe, Nihan Tiryaki, Jeffery Tong, Diane Walton, Otto Williams, Danny Wohlner, Sharon Wong

Volunteers

Thorsten Anderson, Dean Badessa, Cynthia Barnard, Tamar Besson, Lindzy Bivings, Lauren Brinkmeyer, Mary Cantini, Sara Wessen Chang, Jeff Citron, Janine Corcoran, Sam Ferguson, Joe Ferrero, Bill Gardner, Sue Garfield, Marlin Gilbert, Sheila Gleeson, Dave Holmes-Kinsella, Ben Hu, Mara Iaconi, Alisha Kewalramani, Matt Korman, Paul Kretkowski, Morgan Kulla, Alix Marduel, Keith Nelson, Hal Offen, Elizabeth Ozer, Emily Ozer, David Rich, Sue Robbins, Jamie Robinson, Wafaa Sabil, Marie Sayles, Emily Schmitz, Eric Shupert, Willis Stebbins, Kay Stegner, Vicki Stolberg, Kathy Wallace

Test Swim

Tom McCall, Kathleen Duffy, Michael Tschanz-Hahn, Joe Gannon, Peter Cullinan, Eliana Agudelo, Diane Campbell, Bianca Liederer, Ben Chun, Alex Kroeger, Heather Lockhart Kremer, Maeve Lavelle, Damian Guenzing, Tom Bernard

Coghlan Beach (Formerly Gashouse Cove)—March 1, 2025

We originally planned for a swim starting from Gashouse Cove, but due to work being done on the docks in Gashouse, we opted for the tried and true west-to-east route starting at Coghlan Beach. Conditions for the club swim were a tad choppy, but the flood was strong and pushed swimmers in for fast finishes. Thank you to all the volunteers and pilots who made the swim possible.

Place	Name	Swim time	LCP
1	Allison Arnold	0:19:24	10
2	Felicia Lee	0:19:35	9
3	Joby Bernstein	0:19:39	8
4	Mackenzie Kirk	0:20:51	7
5	Kalani Leifer	0:21:02	6
6	Ryan Dalton	0:21:04	5
7	Lauren Brinkmeyer	0:21:21	4
8	Miranda Rouse	0:22:18	3
9	Thorsten Anderson	0:22:25	2
10	Bill Gardner	0:22:41	1
11	Nick Dolce	0:22:52	
12	Tor Lundgren	0:23:01	
13	Christophe Crombez	0:23:05	
14	James Glasnapp	0:23:09	
15	Steve Schatz	0:23:18	
16	Stephen Balhoff	0:23:53	
17	Anna Schatz	0:24:17	
18	Ben Clark	0:24:42	
19	Heather Kremer	0:25:05	
20	Logan Craig	0:25:13	
21	Alf Seccombe	0:25:53	
22	John Gibbon	0:25:58	
23	Keith Gray	0:26:35	
24	Don Thornburg	0:26:54	
25	Tom Reynolds	0:26:56	
26	Ben Hu	0:27:16	
27	Gary Arabatyan	0:27:32	
28	David O'Reilly	0:28:13	
29	Virginie Eskenazi	0:28:18	
30	Rebecca Tilley	0:29:24	
31	Miguel Gonzalez	0:29:28	
32	Kathy Wallace	0:29:31	
33	Alfred Seccombe	0:30:00	
34	Henry Dombey	0:30:09	
35	Mark Lenz	0:31:12	
36	Mickey Lavelle	0:31:15	
37	Jamie Robinson	0:31:32	
38	Nancy Booth	0:31:45	
39	Peter Cullinan	0:31:49	
40	Lisa Domitrovich	0:31:51	
41	Mike Thoresen	0:33:01	
42	Ken Coren	0:33:09	
43	Hal Offen	0:33:29	
44	Robin Hart	0:33:30	
45	Dean Badessa	0:33:41	
46	Brian Johnson	0:33:43	
47	Eliana Agudelo	0:33:47	
48	Jim Frew	0:33:57	
49	Ellen Hathaway	0:34:05	
50	Maryann Murphy	0:34:07	
51	Anne Hamersky	0:34:14	
52	Eric Reed	0:34:34	
53	Farrah Spott	0:34:45	
54	Dan Ryan	0:35:06	
55	Carolyn Hui	0:35:07	
56	Ken Miller	0:35:40	
57	Will Powning	0:35:12	
58	Robin Rome	0:35:30	
59	Vicki Stolberg	0:35:43	
60	Kati Hopman	0:36:08	
61	Peter Neubauer	0:37:05	
62	Amy Brant	0:37:20	

Pilots

Lead Pilot: Tim McElligott / Lead Swim Commissioner: Alex Kroeger

Nathaniel Berger, Ben Chun, Damian Guenzing, Alex Kroeger, Tim McElligott, Nihan Tiryaki, Mike Walsh, Nanda Palmieri, John Thorpe, Lilian Tsai, Dominic Lusinchi, Ally Sillins, Sharon Wong, Jon Bielinski, Jeffrey Tong, Riley Culligan, Grant MacHamer, Tom McCall, Diane Jackson, Don Osborne, Barry Christian, David Zovickian, Denise Sauerteig, Heather Warm, Brian Kiernan, Rohin Daswani, Brooke Blume, Kelsey Dean, John Grunstad, Otto Williams, Laura Croome, Rebecca Wolski, Lissi Knell, Daniel Cavey, David Wagner, Forrest Carroll, Margaret Keenan, Maggie Lonergan, Emily Schmitz

Volunteers

Peter Cullinan, Keith Nelson, Lisa Domitrovich, Elaine Van Vleck, Don Thornburg, Kati Hopman, Ben Hu, Nancy Booth, Morgan Kulla, David O'Reilly, Alfred Seccombe, Peter Neubauer, Christophe Crombez, Mackenzie Kirk, Vicki Stolberg, Darcy Cohn, Dawn Holley, Derrick Rebello, Henry Dombey, Hal Offen, Cynthia Barnard, Kristoffer Milonas, Bill Burke, Aude Bouagnon, Alisha Kewalramani, Erika Kettleson, Mark Lenz, Sue Garfield, Emily Nogue, Juliet Cox, Patrick Kirk, Mary Cantini, Duke Dahlin, Tommaso Trionfi, Janine Corcoran, Joe Ferrero, Lawrence Remstedt, Ernst Halperin, Matt Korman, Liam Ronan, Bianca Liederer, David Rich, Kim Gorcyca

Test Swim

Ally Sillins, Dominic Lusinchi, Rebecca Tilley, Holly Reed, Tim McElligott, Alex Kroeger, Damian Guenzing, Bill Gardner, Tim Dumm, Virginia Waik, Sean Lavelle, Bill Burke, Heather Warm, Lawrence Remstedt

The Dolphin Swimming
& Boating Club
502 Jefferson Street
San Francisco, CA 94109

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2025 DOLPHIN CLUB SWIM & EVENT SCHEDULE

Event	Day	Date	Current/Tide (Gg)	Jump
*New Year's Day Alcatraz**	WED	1 Jan	09:42 1.7kn F	07:00
New Year's Day Cove	WED	1 Jan		09:00
*Pier 41**	SUN	2 Feb	05:30 2.0kn E	07:30
Valentine's Day Singles Regatta	SAT	15 Feb		
Old Timers' Lunch	SUN	16 Feb		
*Gashouse Cove**	SAT	1 Mar	09:54 1.8kn F	08:30
End of Polar Bear	FRI	21 Mar		
Start of Walt Stack Challenge	SAT	22 Mar		
*Pier 39**	SAT	22 Mar	08:54 1.5kn E	08:00
Blackaller Buoy Run	SUN	13 Apr		
*Coghlan Beach**	SAT	26 Apr	09:12 1.6kn F	08:30
Walt Schneebeli Over-60 Cove	SAT	10 May		07:00
Master Mariners Regatta	SAT	24 May		
*Yacht Harbor**	SUN	25 May	09:24 1.6kn F	09:00
End of Walt Stack Challenge	SAT	31 May		
Start of 100 Mile Swim	SUN	1 Jun		
McCovey Cove Mixer	SAT	7 Jun		
*John Nogue Swim For Science - Pier 15**	SAT	14 Jun	05:18 2.3kn E	07:00
*Pride Swim**	SUN	22 Jun	08:24 1.4kn F	
Angel Island Picnic & Overnight	SAT	28 Jun		
*Bay Bridge**	SUN	13 Jul	05:12 2.5kn E	07:00
Alcatraz Regatta	SUN	20 Jul		
*China Beach***	SUN	10 Aug	11:00 1.8kn F	07:30
*Santa Cruz 1 Mile**	SAT	16 Aug		
*Santa Cruz 2 Mile**	SUN	17 Aug		
*Doc Howard 45+ Swim**	SAT	23 Aug	10:42 2.0kn F	11:00
*Ft. Point**	SUN	7 Sep	09:48 1.8kn F	07:30
Escape from Alcatraz Tri (EFAT)	SUN	14 Sep	09:06 0.9kn E	06:45
Swim Across America	SUN	21 Sep		
Alcatraz	SUN	28 Sep	08:30 0.7kn E	07:00
*DC/SE Interclub Tri**	SAT	4 Oct		
Joe Bruno Golden Gate	SAT	25 Oct	06:24 0.9kn E	09:15
End of 100 Mile Swim	FRI	31 Oct		
Angel Island Regatta	SAT	1 Nov		
Veterans Day Swim (Cove)	SAT	8 Nov		08:00
Pilot Appreciation Dinner	SAT	8 Nov		
Thanksgiving Day Cove	THU	27 Nov		
New Year's Day Qualifier & Holiday Brunch	SUN	14 Dec		08:00
Start of Polar Bear	SUN	21 Dec		

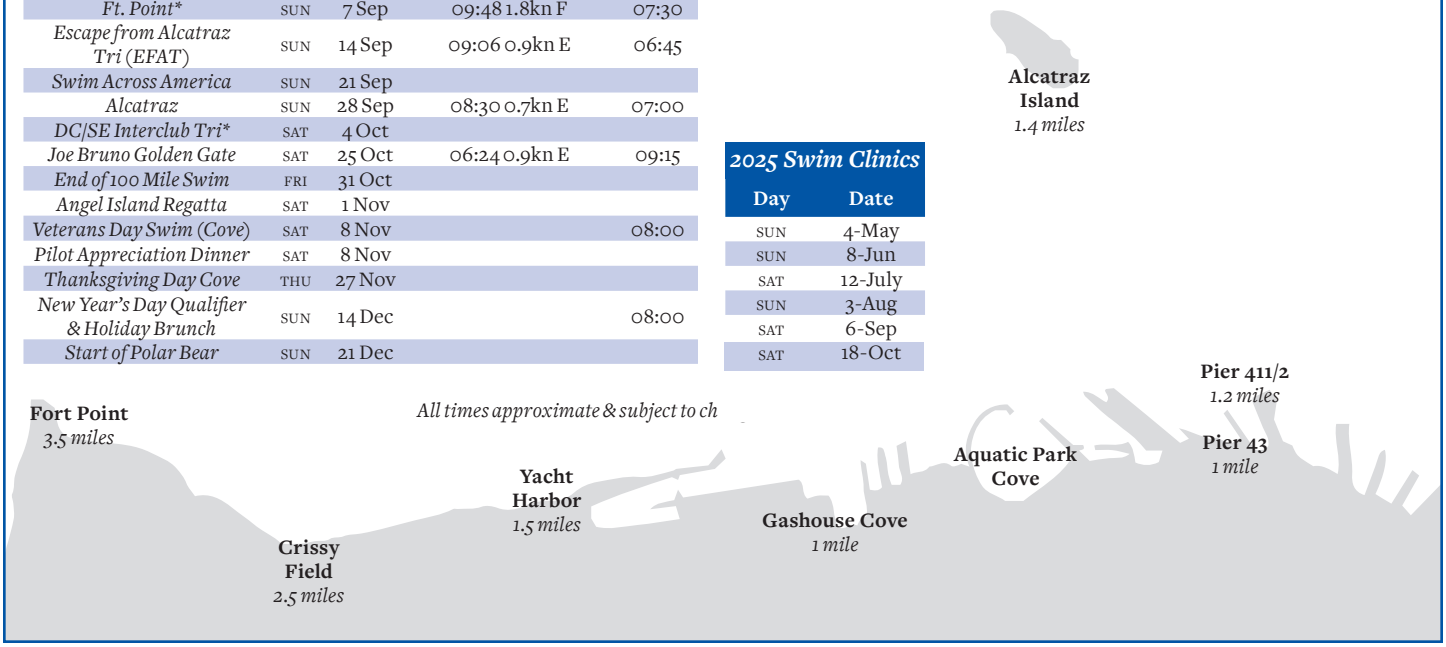
Swim Program Rules

1. Club scheduled swims are restricted to Club members, who are current on their dues and fees and in good standing.
2. Swimmers must have current USMS membership, and abide by each organization's rules and requirements.
3. Swimmers are required to wear orange caps on all scheduled swims.
4. Swimmers cannot use swim aids, including fins and wet suits, on any scheduled swims.
5. New members are not eligible to swim in scheduled out-of-cove swims for either 6 months from the start of their membership, or before successfully completing the 100-mile swim, the Polar Bear swim, or the Accelerated Out-of-Cove process.
6. All out-of-cove swims require a pilot:swimmer ratio of 1:3.
7. Time limits may be imposed at the discretion of the Swim Commissioner(s).
8. All Club boats are reserved for scheduled swims. Co-pilots are encouraged. Riders are prohibited.
9. Swimmers must register during check-in and attend the swim briefing in order to swim.
10. Swimmers must successfully complete at least two qualifying swims and help on at least three swims to qualify for Alcatraz and Golden Gate Swims.
11. Out-of-town members must have successfully completed two of the last three Club scheduled Alcatraz and/or Golden Gate swims or meet Rule 10 above.

(Nothing in the above rules shall contravene any applicable Federal laws and statutes.)

** Qualifying Swim. Need 2 qualifying swims + 3 helps to qualify for Golden Gate and/or Alcatraz.*
*** Requires special qualifier, details TBA*

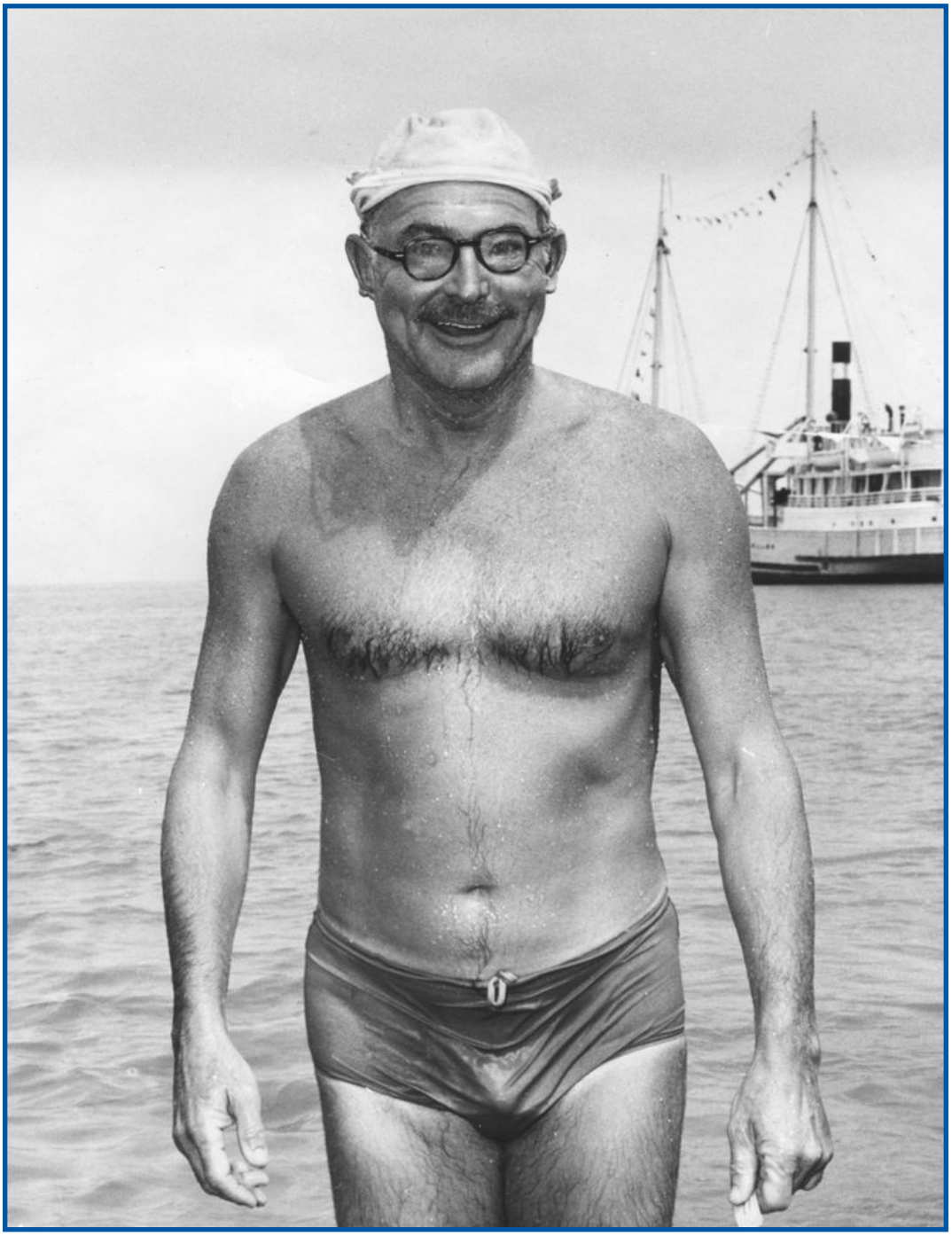
2025 Swim Clinics	
Day	**Date**
SUN	4-May
SUN	8-Jun
SAT	12-July
SUN	3-Aug
SAT	6-Sep
SAT	18-Oct



SUMMMER 2025

DOLPHIN LOG

THE BULLETIN OF THE DOLPHIN SWIMMING & BOATING CLUB • SAN FRANCISCO • ESTABLISHED 1877



Bill Powning

Father of the Polar Bear

Dolphin Log

Larry Scroggins, *Editor*

Mark Robinson, *Consulting Editor*

Jenny Luu, *Art Director*

Janice Wood, *Proofreader*

Club Archivist

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Editorial Policy

Submission of any and all material to the Log editors from any and all authors constitutes an agreement between the authors and the editors. This agreement gives to the editors the right to alter the submitted material in any way that the editors feel will improve the material for Log readers. Decisions to alter or publish submitted material will be the decision solely of the editors.

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Asst. Club Manager: Brendan Sheehan

Ocean Swimming in Santa Barbara

by Terry Kleid

Calling all Dolphins! Come swim with us in Santa Barbara! I am a lifetime Dolphin member and still swim at Aquatic Park when I'm in San Francisco. When you're in Santa Barbara, join the Ocean Ducks (aka Los Patos Del Mar). We are a ragtag group of swimmers who have been plying the ocean together since 2004. We have no president or elected officials, but we are enthusiastic swimmers of all ages and abilities.

Butterfly Beach in Santa Barbara

You will find us at the west end of Butterfly Beach on Sundays at 9 a.m. There is plenty of street parking on Butterfly Lane and Channel Drive. There are steps leading to the beach and we gather to the right, where we have a card table filled with food. We put our stuff on the big boulders that surround the beach. There are no changing rooms or bathrooms. Those amenities can be found at Ledbetter Beach, another Ocean Duck hangout at various times during the week. (Google *Leadbetter Beach, 801 Shoreline Drive*.)

Conditions vary throughout the year. Our summer water temperatures can reach into the low 70s, and our winter temperatures recently plunged to 51.5 degrees. The surf can be pounding, the sand can be swept away leaving some rocks, or it can be sandy and lovely getting in. In the summer there are buoys for we swimmers that follow the coast for over half a mile. On a clear day you may see lots of fish, a leopard shark, octopus, and other ocean gems. We often see pods of dolphins, seals, squadrons of pelicans, occasional ospreys, and other coastal birds.

Just like you Dolphins, we Ducks enjoy after-swim camaraderie with a table of goodies, including carafes of hot coffee. We've even had a group of drummers come to help us celebrate birthdays. For many of us, the Ocean Ducks have become an important community in our lives.

You can contact us through our group email: *ocean-ducks@googlegroups.com*

We send you Dolphins a hearty Quack and hope to see you.

Editor's Note

The 50-year history of the Polar Bear Challenge would not exist without the *Dolphin Log Archive*. Rich Cooper created and maintains this trove of Dolphin Club lore. All the Dolphin Logs (1949 – 2024) are online! For people interested in exploring the rich narrative of the Club, this is a fascinating and invaluable resource. For immediate access use the link: https://tinyurl.com/DolphinLogs.

Commissioners:

Swimming

Swim Commissioners: Alex Kroeger, Lindsay Stripling, Ben Chun
Check-in: Eric Shupert **Clean-up:** Steve Carlson **Clothes Wrangling:** Janine Corcoran **Swim Trinkets:** Margaret Keenan **Timing:** Janice Wood, Emily Nogue, Tamar Besson **Galley Captain:** Derrick Rebello **Swim Clinic Director:** Diane Campbell

Rowing

Lake Merced Captain: Jim Storm, Rachael Perry **Kayak Training:** Margaret Keenan **Motorized Fleet Commissioner & Chief Pilot:** Nathaniel Berger **Non-Motorized Piloting:** Terry Horn **Shell Training:** Tony Foe **Learn to Row:** Dominic Lusinchi, **Grizzly Challenge:** Zack McCune **SUP Training:** Lisa Weaver **Boat Shop:** Jon Bielinski, Julia Hechanova

Other Athletics

DC/SERC TRI Captain: Ward Bushee **EFAT:** Gina Rus **Handball Captain:** Brendan Monaghan **Running Commissioner:** Trina Garry **Weight Room Captain:** Reed Boyer

Lockers

Women's Captain: Crissa Williams
Men's Captain: David Zovickian

Bill Powning – The Man Behind the Polar Bear

by Matthew Sheridan

(Adapted from Fall 1999 Dolphin Log)

Bill Powning was quite fond of telling people, "I never miss a party, and I never miss a swim." He could be spotted from afar at any Dolphin social event, usually sporting a madras jacket and sipping a martini. Bill and his wife, Jacqueline Powning, brought a certain style and class to the Dolphin Club.

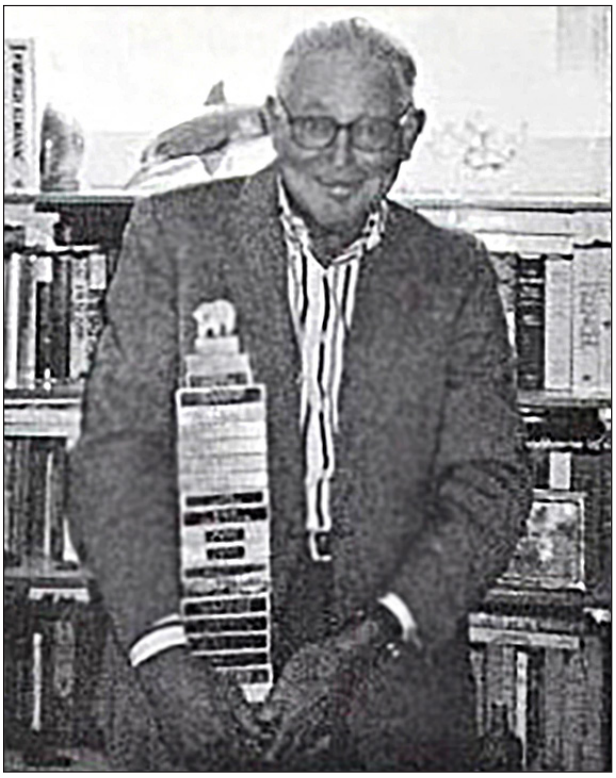
As a young man growing up in Connecticut, Bill spent his summers swimming in Long Island Sound, readying himself for his future cold-water exploits. A graduate of Yale University, he enrolled in Harvard Business School, believing there would be no war. When World War II did break out, despite having been awarded a scholarship, Powning passed up Harvard to make his contribution to the war effort.

The U.S. military was not an option because of his nearsightedness. Instead, he joined the civilian American Field Service (AFS) as a volunteer ambulance driver. He served with the British 8th Army in North Africa and Italy, and later with the French army in Germany and Austria. When Germany surrendered. Bill drove his newly acquired BMW to Paris and resigned from the AFS. In France, he got a job with the U.S. State Department, where "six months turned into three years."

Being a young man who spoke French fairly well, with a good car and access to gasoline through his State Department position, he soon found himself in an enviable situation. "During that time, I came across Jacqueline Soubiran," he recalls. "She was really pretty." They married in Montréal in 1948.

Bill was a carpet salesman in Florida and Georgia, and then in San Francisco in 1953 and 1954. From 1957 to 1964 he was the general manager of Tai Ping Carpets, living in Riverside, Connecticut. When that job ended, Powning headed straight back to San Francisco, having loaded his wife, kids, and two dogs in his new convertible. He spent the next 15 years in the carpet business and another 15 years as a real estate broker with Pacific Union.

He was introduced to the Dolphin Club in 1968 and started swimming five days a week, always wearing his eyeglasses. By the end of the year, he completed his first Dolphin Club swim: the Golden Gate. Over the next 30 years he completed no fewer than 303 Dolphin Club swims. After creating the Polar Bear Challenge in 1974, Bill accumulated 23 marble blocks in a row, maintaining the longest continuous streak of any Dolphin until being surpassed by Vincent Huang.



Bill Powning displays his Polar Bear Stack

His son, Will Powning, joined the Dolphin Club in 1985. In honor of the 50th anniversary of the Polar Bear, Will swam 50 miles this year.

Obsessive Compulsion & 50 Years of Polar Bear History

by Larry Scroggins

Nineteen seventy-four marked the birth of an event that has grown, morphed, and ruled people's lives for 50 years. Dolphin Club members Bill Powning, "Doc" Howard, and Lou Marcelli formed the locus of a small group that swam all year round. Bill wanted to increase winter companionship in the Bay and in the sauna. In conversation with Lou, he conceived the creation of a small marble block in the shape of an ice cube to award fellow Dolphins who swam more than a minimum number of miles between December 21 and March 21, inclusive. A quick glance at the trophy case in the Staib Room reveals the allure of trophies, cups, and awards to the Dolphins of the time. The original goal was 18 miles and, 50 years later, it's obvious that Bill's idea became a roaring success.

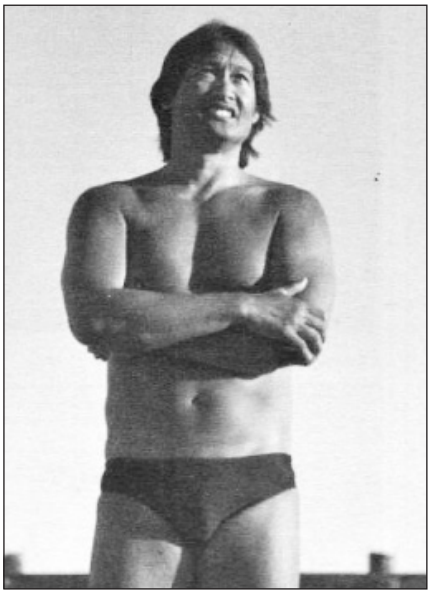
Powning's Polar Bear Stack

That winter of 1974-1975, 30 Club members participated in the first Polar Bear Challenge. 21 met or exceeded the 18-mile minimum requirement and their marble block came complete with a miniature polar bear figurine. Modesto Lanzone obliterated the field with a total of 82 miles. In fact, 9 swimmers posted more than 30 miles, including Bill Powning. Thus was born an annual tournament of evolution, excess, and obsession.

The winter of 1978-1979 saw two evolutions. For one, the required distance increased to 24 miles. For another, three women completed the challenge for the second time—Joni Beemsterboer, Morgan Kulla, and Pavla Podolska. The required mileage increased to 30 starting with the 1982-1983 season. In 1986, the co-swim commissioners, Vincent Huang and Tom Hoffman, made the hugely controversial decision to raise the mileage requirement to 40.

Obsessing the streak

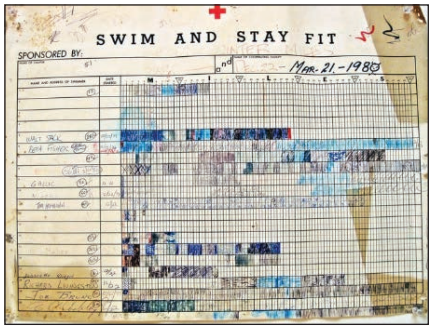
When Vincent joined the Dolphin Club in 1978, the Polar Bear recording document was on a regular sheet of paper. Someone would draw a bunch of lines and people would put their names and mileage down. At the time, Vincent was heavily involved in the Red Cross and had access to their stockroom. He walked in, saw their official mileage charts, and said to himself, "This is what we've got to use!" The Red Cross charts had room on each line to record up to 50 miles. Vincent imagined that the challenge would incrementally increase to 50 because he was thinking, "God—all this wasted paper!" As a step in this direction, Tom and Vincent announced that the new mileage goal was increasing to 40 and not everyone was ready to get on board. "That became a big stink," Huang says. "This was a time before email and texting and everything else,



Vincent Huang ponders his streak

so when people didn't like you at the Club, they'd stick notes in your locker. I'd get these notes posted on the bulletin board. I got messages on my home phone. It was just crazy!"

Vincent survived this barrage of complaints and now stands apart as the holder of the most consecutive Polar Bear trophies. His latest marble block counts as number 47. "When I first joined the Club, my goal was just to swim across the Golden Gate. I'm kind of an obsessive, compulsive individual, so I said, 'I'm going to do every Golden Gate; I'm going to do every Alcatraz. And then when the Escape [from Alcatraz Triathlon] came, I'm going to do every Escape. I'm going to do every Polar Bear swim.'" However, over the years, various circumstances interfered with the streak for each event other than the Polar Bear. "I remember being in the sauna with all the morning crew and telling people, 'I just completed my 25th consecutive Polar Bear,' and people were amazed." Thus, the passion was fueled and renewed. Vincent's string was almost broken when he had a heart attack. "It was December 13 when I had the heart attack and all I could think about was the Polar Bear. When the Polar Bear came,



Original Red Cross Chart

the doctor said, 'You shouldn't go in the water and blah, blah, blah.' It wasn't until January 3rd that I got in the water. No one in my whole early morning group of about half a dozen people wanted to swim with me because I was such a liability. I think I did about 43 miles, so it was one of my bigger accomplishments." By the following year, he was mostly fully recovered with his streak still alive. "After 40 [consecutive marble blocks], I was on my own and now I have to make it to 50. The joke is that I thought, 'If I do enough of these, I could tile my whole bathroom.' After 47, it's nowhere near enough to do my bathroom. So now, they're all glued together in a stack that stands 37 inches tall."

Obsessing the championship

As Vincent says, "This is the time of year when you see everyone turn on their OCD during these three months." One expression of this obsessive-compulsive disorder manifests itself as the Polar Bear "champion." This is the person who swims the most miles during the winter season. The Club created the perpetual championship trophy when Elmer Tosta broke the 100-mile barrier in 1984-1985. The bar was set, and the next year George Kebbe hoisted the bar to 200 miles. This set the stage for the first Polar Bear championship battle royale, complete with ruses and skulduggery. In the Dolphin Log of Summer 2006, Keith Howell tells this story:

"The rivalry that will go down in history was in 1987 between George Kebbe and El Presidente Stan Hlynsky. It all began when Stan, who was first to 40, overheard George scoffing at the idea that Stan could keep it up. Stan stepped out from behind a row of lockers and said, 'I'm not going anywhere.'

George retorted, 'I'm younger and faster.'

'I'm older and stronger,' Stan replied, more of a rower and weightlifter than a swimmer.

To make up for his slower pace, Stan swam out in the Cove with the tide but kept to the beach against it. Still, it meant putting in long hours in the water.

'I ate five meals a day,' says Stan. His then girlfriend, Suzanne Heim, who had urged him on initially, never saw him and began to wonder if he was having an affair.

Stan Hlynsky

When Stan would stagger out of the water, all he could think about was making it to the foot bath. One day, the [foot bath] water was frozen over and he didn't even notice. After four hours in the water one morning, Stan was afraid he couldn't make it back to the beach. As he sat recovering in the sauna, he remembers George saying, 'That crazy bastard is going to kill himself. But he's not going to kill me.'

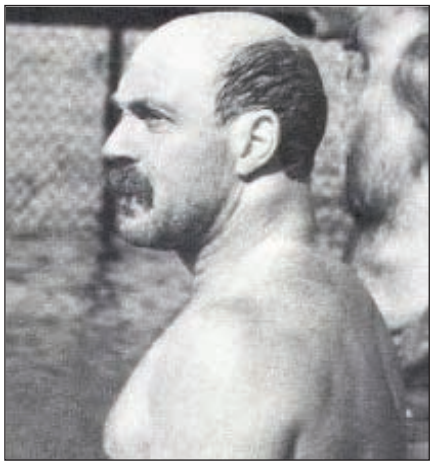
Still, [the competition] could get tense, such as the time that Stan locked an exhausted George out of the building after a swim. And both of them complained that they came in to find their lockers shut fast with crazy glue.

At the end, George felt that he could make up a small remaining deficit. That is, until he came into the Club to find that Stan had put on six miles overnight. With a little help from Jon Bielinski, he had taken a tide ride from bridge to bridge."

The mileage Stan racked up that season set a new Polar Bear record of 230 miles. Three years later, Mike Rolleri also cracked the 200-mile barrier with 217. Then, in 1993, Patrick Freilinger set yet a higher bar. In some ways, Stan Hlynsky shared the new record. Stan assumed the substantial organizational, administrative, and logistical burden to conduct several multi-mile, tide-assisted swims. He encouraged (or perhaps bullied) Patrick into devoting his winter to moving the Polar Bear milestone to 232.

The next year, George Kebbe locked into Polar Bear battle with Laura Merkl. She took the prize with 174 miles and became the first female champion. Defeat in this competition only served to fuel George's competitive fire. In 1995, he set a new record of 255 miles. Afterward, the irrepressible George would come into the men's sauna laughing and slapping his belly and exclaiming, "So, Larry! Do you think anybody is going to beat 255? I don't think so! Ho! Ho! Ho!" I replied, "George. You've put it on a shelf that no one can reach." WRONG.

In 2003, Suzie Dods swam 256 Polar Bear miles and became the second female champion.



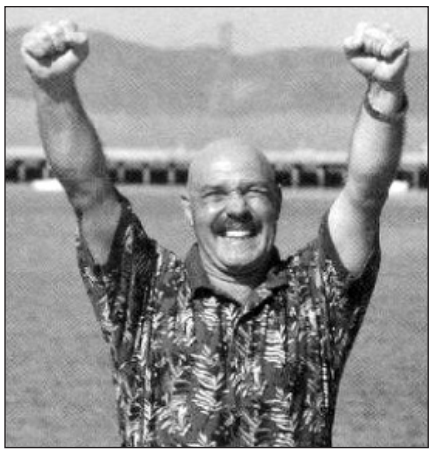
George Kebbe

Suzie Dods

In the years between 1995 and 2003, George had taken up a new vocation as flight instructor and had pretty much retired from swimming at the Club. Suzie's new record brought him screaming back. In 2004, he crushed the old mark with a total of 356 miles. Of course, he came charging into the sauna saying, "So, Larry! Do you think anybody is going to beat 356? I don't think so! Ho! Ho! Ho!" Ever willing to be the useful idiot, I said, "George. You've really put this on a shelf that no one can reach now."

No swimmer broke the Polar Bear 200-mile barrier after that until 2007 when Ralph Wenzel tied the record at 356. Krist Jake tells the story this way:

"Born in East Germany, low-keyed and modest, Ralph Wenzel owns and manages the renowned San Francisco bakery, Schubert's. In the 2006-2007 PB season, Ralph swam each of the 91 days of winter to achieve his goal of 356 miles, to equal, but not exceed, the record set by Kebbe in 2004.



George Kebbe after 356

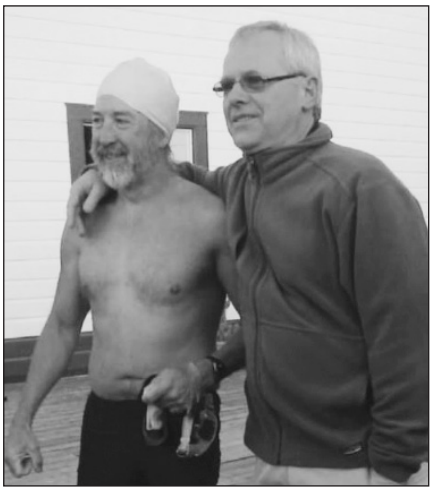
According to the famed *San Francisco Chronicle* reporter Carl Nolte in a laudatory SFGate.com article, on the last day of PB, 'With a chance to break the record and set a new mark, he stood up and walked out of the water. It was clear he could have gone back in the Bay, taken another lap around the Aquatic Park lagoon, and torn up the record book.' 'I don't feel like going back in again,' he said. Asked why he didn't break the record, he shrugged and walked away to the sauna. In times when records are made to be broken and winners are hailed as superheroes, Wenzel seems to be a throwback to another age.'"

In the succeeding years, no one posted more than 200 miles with the single exception of Nigel Killeen, finishing with 208 miles in 2008. Then came "Three-pete" Peter. Purposely swimming exactly 356 miles during the 2012-2013 winter, Peter Perez tied the record shared by George Kebbe and Ralph Wenzel.

It was not pretty. Commenting on his victory picture on the cover of the Dolphin Log, Peter says, "A close look at the photograph shows what looks like sand on my side. It's not. It's actually a raging rash from shingles. And my smile doesn't reveal the missing crown that exposes a raw nerve. I lost the crown a week before but there had been no time to deal with it. I was physically and mentally busted up and exhausted after 420 or so swims during one of the coldest water winters in our collective Club memory.

When Michael Matthay diagnosed my growing rash as shingles, I lost two days and was banned from the sauna when I returned. Michael never gave me a chance to throw in the towel. Instead, he calculated how I could finish on time and his enthusiasm was so great that I didn't have the heart to disappoint him.

I kept going even though it took a week of seven to eight miles a day to catch up. Michael is clever that way." Peter chose to tie the record. He wrote, "No one who was there at the time will forget the astonishing news that Ralph [Wenzel] would



Peter Perez and Ralph Wenzel

intentionally not break George's record. The surprise was quickly followed by admiration. In this age of overpaid athletes with over-the-top egos, here was an example of real sportsmanship. I set out also to not break the 356-mile record. In doing so, we would have three Club members who hit that mark and it would be more than a three-way tie—it would be a new Club tradition." Peter hoped that subsequent swimmers who tied the record would be known as having done a "George."

Then came Duke Dahlin. In 2015, at the age of 67, he decided to set a new Polar Bear record at 400 miles. Duke writes in the Dolphin Log, "I [had] been contemplating breaking the record for years. My original goal was to swim 5 miles each day, breaking my routine into 4 segments.

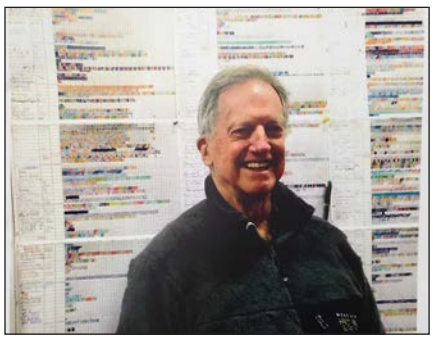
Duke Dahlin

Polar Bear Championship Trophy

Why do I want to break the record? Why not? I come from a competitive background and records are made to be BROKEN!" At the very beginning of the season, after having racked up 10 miles in two days, Duke took a planned 6-day vacation to spend Christmas in Las Vegas with family. Then, on January 10, he caught a bad cold that hung him out to dry for 5 days. While on his sick bed, as Peter had before him, he recalibrated and decided to start swimming 5½ miles per day on his return. He wrote, "This doesn't sound like much but those ½ miles started to add up." Duke completed all 400 miles on March 20, the day before the official end of the Polar Bear. When asked if he did that because this was a leap year which contributed an extra day to the PB season, he didn't really answer. He just grinned sheepishly and shrugged.

Just plain obsessing

In a Polar Bear category of his own is Joe Illick. Joe first won the Polar Bear championship in 2001 with 141¾ miles. He was 67 years old. He won again in 2002 with 147 miles. In 2006, Joe entered the Polar Bear battle with Rick Avery. Rick tells this story. "We were battling it out. We were both keeping an eye on each other. Then Joe had a mild heart attack and he got right back in the water. I went to him and said, 'Joe. Come on. Let's not continue this fight. Let's pick a mile number and call it a tie.' He agreed to that and we both slowed down a little bit because we were both just going crazy. We were swimming 2 to 3 to 4 hours a day, double- and triple-dipping." In 2006, Joe tied with Rick at 152 miles.



Joe Illick won the Polar Bear four times

Joe won again in 2014 with 140 miles. Counting these four championships, he swam more than 100 miles in fourteen distinct Polar Bear seasons. This includes exceeding the 200-mile mark in 2003 with 203 miles but still losing the championship to Suzie Dods.

In March of 2023, Joe was executing his regular routine of "double-dips." However, he was not his normal ebullient self in the sauna. For a couple of days, after the first "dip" he complained about feeling tired and cold and hesitant to return to the water. He never revealed his motivation for stressing over his squares that season. He also ignored entreaties to "listen to his body." He had well over the 40 miles necessary to claim a complete Polar Bear.

On his last swim, he returned to the shore with a halting and uneven stroke. He may have been making 20 strokes per minute and they were quite ragged. He walked out onto the sand on his own power and began climbing the steps to the rear deck, gripping the railing with one hand. Daniel Handler writes, "When I came down to swim, Joe was climbing up the short staircase from the beach and he looked in a bad way. He moved slowly and awkwardly as if in a daze, and his facial expression looked like he was searching for something. A woman at the deck showers immediately thought something was wrong and asked him if he was OK. He said yes, faintly and unconvincingly. I said hello to him and he said hello to me—in a way that felt more like social instinct than really being aware, although he did use my name. Then he started to tilt and you could see his entire body didn't know what to do. He grabbed wrongly, he turned around and then seemed to change his mind— it was all a mess of limbs and slow decisions. And then he fell, the worst way he could have. Something was wrong when he got out of the water, and there was no time to make it right."

Joe crashed headfirst into the bottom wooden step. The tide was very high that day and the water surged around his head on successive waves. It took a collection of almost half a dozen people to hoist him off the steps and onto the deck. The paramedics were onsite and attending to him within 15 minutes and then rushing him to the hospital, which he never left. He was 89 years old.

First to Forty obsession

Peter Perez

Thinking that the Polar Bear season lacked sufficient cause for obsession, swim commissioners Tom Keller and Ted Tilles invented the "First to Forty" challenge. In the 2005-2006 season, Rick Avery completed his 40 miles in 11 days and became the first speed champion. Then Peter Perez decided to bring his fierce determination coupled with an analytical approach to

the competition. Writing in the Spring 2007 Log, Peter said, "Rick Avery set the record by finishing the 40 miles in 11 days. I want to do it in four days. In fact, I'm the last person anyone would expect to be the First to 40. I'm a scrawny, 50-year-old man—a slow swimmer who is consistently one of the last to finish a Dolphin swim event. The idea was intriguing. The record of 11 days was less than four miles a day. With ample recovery time and rest between swims I was sure I could do five miles a day. That would be an eight-day Polar Bear. What if I did six miles...?" Peter conducted multiple trials with swimming and heating times, keeping a detailed diary on water temperatures, swimming distances, and recovery times. "During these experiments, people began to notice me taking notes and re-entering the water. There was no avoiding the subject while in the sauna, but I needed to keep my rapidly developing plan a secret. If a faster swimmer tried the same thing, there would be no hope of my being first to 40. So, I did what anyone would do — I lied."

As December 21 approached, he finalized his plan. He did his Christmas shopping early, cleared his calendar between the 21st and 26th. He bought a large array of supplies, including energy foods, light sticks, and Bag Balm. He even made a large pot of chicken soup. "Nobody knows what I'm up to. I've decided not to lie about how far I've swum if asked but I'm avoiding even small talk. 'How far did you swim?' is the question of the day, and as the day progresses my answer is a source of growing anxiety for me. I cannot win a race to 40 against a fast swimmer—unless I have a huge and discouraging lead." The appearance of 40 colored squares on the chart the second day of the Polar Bear caused quite a stir. Some people were checking with him to make sure he knew how to mark his squares correctly. On his next to last swim on the fourth day, with a ½ mile to go, he was climbing the stairs to the Club and heard the dead bolt slide shut. It's 11 pm and the gatekeeper is locking up for the night. "Luckily, he sees me. When we tell him that the Club President okayed our staying after hours he agrees to lock up when we leave." After warming and swimming the last mile, he set the new First to Forty record at four days and 40 minutes.

Rick Avery

The next year, Lauren Weisenthal obliterated Peter's mark by swimming 40 miles in 2 days and 12 hours. She was younger and faster than Peter—less than half his age and more than twice his speed. Peter was right to believe that no amount of guile and cunning could overcome these advantages by a determined swimmer. Twice after Lauren's accomplishment two other swimmers attempted to swim 40 miles in one day. Both were strapping young men who were exceedingly fast and fit. Not only did they not beat Lauren's record, one had what appeared to be a nervous breakdown in the shower and neither man returned to the Club. Since then, the First to Forty champions have been dedicated, but (sort of) sensible people.

The 3,000-mile obsession

Laura Merkl has swum more than 3,000 miles in San Francisco Bay during winter in nothing more than a swimsuit, swim cap, and goggles. This means walking into Bay water from December 21 until March 21 and swimming mile after mile, day after day, and year after year when the temperature is as cold as 47 degrees and almost never warmer than 53 degrees Fahrenheit. Laura Merkl is the solitary human to have done this.

Laura Merkl

Although she swam through the winter, for the first couple of years of membership Laura remained unmindful of the Polar Bear mileage charts festooning the entry to the Dolphin Club. Then, in the 1986-1987 season, she decided to partake. Since she was living nearby the Club and working downtown, she felt like the 40 miles required at the time for a marble block was insufficient and thought, "100 sounds good." Sure enough, slightly more than 120 miles later, Laura had earned her first Polar Bear.

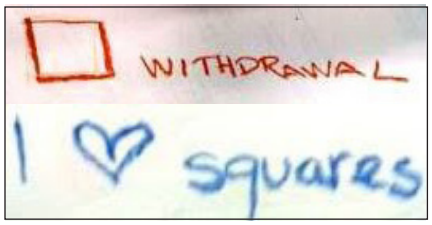
Then in the winter of 1993-1994, she was again on target for more than 100 miles. When she attended the Old Timers dinner in February, Dolphins asked her about her aspirations to be the Polar Bear champion that season. She said, "I don't know what that is." Her friends excitedly told her, "Well, there's the Polar Bear and then there's the Polar Bear CHAMP! You could be the CHAMP!" Alerted to this possibility, Laura quickly learned that no woman had ever before been the Polar Bear champion. She says, "I've never felt anything negative being female at the Club," but the idea of being the first woman champion held substantial appeal.

She and fellow member George Kebbe were closely matched in swimming speed and had developed a friendly and competitive relationship in the Club-sponsored events. As it turned out, George

also had his eye on the Polar Bear championship. In order to win the Polar Bear Laura had to swim more miles that winter than George and more winter miles than she ever had swum before. Club members avidly monitored the race in slow motion, regularly checking the mileage log in the foyer as she and George spurred each other along through the remaining weeks of the Polar Bear.

Their colored squares leapfrogged one another in a simulacrum of a fiercely contested Olympic event. Laura had plenty of support. Women would regularly find her almost sleeping in the sauna and bring her strong coffee. Stan Hlynsky, president of the Club the year before, would leave voicemails on her office phone with words of encouragement including advice to "eat more." And eat she did. She had recently started a new job and three bagels for a morning snack were common. Her gob-smacked co-workers were left marveling at where she put all this food on her lean frame. By March 21, 1994, her determination had produced 174 miles and the first woman's name to adorn the Polar Bear Champion plaque.

The next winter Laura cruised to a leisurely 101 miles. Then she moved to San Carlos and took a job in San Jose, leaving herself a daily commute of over 100 miles if she wanted to



keep up her string of Polar Bears. In the next four seasons, she swam 50, 78, 80, and 75 miles: admittedly short of 100, but still a mind-boggling display of discipline. In the winter of 1999-2000, with her commute dramatically reduced, she swam 150 miles and tied with Scott Haskins to once again affix her name to the championship trophy.

For the next six years, she posted 100 miles or more. Then came a five year stretch during which her South Bay commute resumed and she could only manage to chart mileage in the 80s and 90s. In the 2011-2012 season, the scourge of extreme athletes struck and she began to suffer severe shoulder pain. She finished with a measly 68 miles. Of course, she postponed the necessary rotator cuff surgery until after the Polar Bear was over.

As she recovered from surgery and pondered her goals for the coming year, her accounting instincts kicked in and she realized that she had accumulated more than 2,600 winter miles in the Bay. It occurred to her that people bike 3,000 miles across the U.S. They hike 3,000 miles across the U.S. No one can swim 3,000 miles across the U.S. But isn't 3,000 a good number for Polar Bear attainment? By March 21, 2017, she had racked up 3,035.75 miles. She now has over 3,200 miles in her wake and has not formulated another goal beyond, "keep it up."

Obsessing the squares

Swimmers often refer to the distance they've covered in a day in terms of squares--an artifact of Vince Huang's Red Cross charts, where four squares equals a mile. "We did four squares today—at least a mile." Since 1984, earning a Polar Bear requires swimming forty miles (or 160 squares) in the San Francisco Bay or equivalent cold, open water. For swimmers over the age of 60, the benchmark is 80 squares. Over the course of a winter, the tally sheet develops a personality as members exercise artistic license to record their daily distance. Making these individualized marks on the chart after each swim bestows a sense of completion and confers a coda on the cold-water plunge. The chart becomes a touchstone, a measure of resistance to mortality. The deep satisfaction associated with marking squares creates a craving that any addict would immediately recognize. When the chart was moved one winter to allow workers to repair the lobby floor, many Club members experienced "square shock." Our beacon was

mislaid. Our anchor had dragged. Although realization dawned quickly, the feeling was visceral—a shock to the polar plexus.

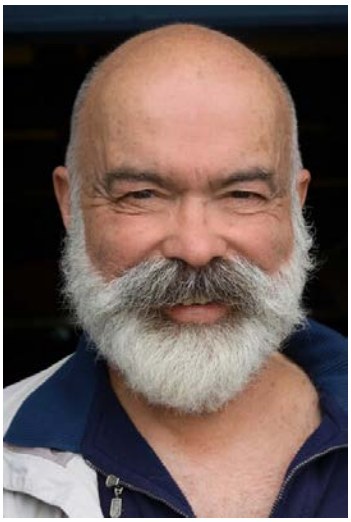
When the Polar Bear is over at the end of a long, cold winter, the chart is dismantled and square withdrawal sets in. The chart is not just temporarily relocated. It is gone. It is history--now 50 years of history and counting. The unique configuration of colors and patterns contributed by the 135 participants this year is obliterated like a Tibetan sand mandala. It leaves a vague, empty space in our souls. Who can wait until next winter?

The 50th Polar Bear Challenge is now concluded and it seems only fitting that Vincent Huang should have the last word. "The annual Polar Bear Swim/Challenge has historically been steeped in both lore and intrigue. Over the three winter months, December 21 to March 21, and particularly the last week of the Polar Bear, one would have to turn a blind eye to not notice the number of members consumed by a compulsion to finish. Days off, illness, business trips, and winter vacations often led to a mental frenzy of math recalculations ensuring completion by March 21," Vince says. "I always thought the PB could provide a great case study on OCD for anyone studying behavioral psychology. The PB, after all, became all about .... the squares."

Polar bears call them squares
And it's true they have right angles.
But no matter the tides,
If you measure the sides,
They really are rectangles.

– Joe Illick

In Memoriam



Elmer Tosta

Al de la Peña

Suzie Royce

Elmer Tosta – Quintessential Dolphin Spirit

By David Zovickian and Jill Tosta

Elmer Tosta was many things in his 76 years. Most importantly he was devoted to his family: husband to Jill for more than 50 years, father to Ariel, and grandfather to Ava and Jackson. Following his discharge from the Air Force he was a fixture in North Beach. For many years he ran Galletti Bros. Shoe Service. If you had a pair of Birkenstocks, chances are you got them from him or he resoled them. More recently he roamed SFO working for Virgin and Alaska Airlines. When Virgin America started up and set Burlingame as its headquarters, Elmer figured it would be a cool job so he applied. Initially he worked at the pre-security area: the ticket/bag check counter. It wasn't too long before his people skills were recognized and he began covering more areas. He was responsible for training and supervising pretty much any area where employees interacted with customers: ticketing, baggage, and gate. When something was blowing up, he was the fireman. When Alaska bought Virgin, he pretty quickly found himself in the same roles in spite of being from the acquired company. These past several years he was the guy who would escort VIPs through the airport and give tours to visiting executives.

In the 40-plus years I knew Elmer, he embodied the quintessential Dolphin spirit. Elmer contributed to the Club in just about every means imaginable. He took as much time as was needed to share stories with fellow Dolphin Old Timers or reminding new members of the importance of good citizenship in the Club. He served on our Board of Governors; was by my side at "zero-dark-thirty" in my stint as Swim Commissioner; supported countless training swims for several English Channel aspirants, including a couple of excursions across "The Pond;" put many hours into the building of the *Cecco* and *Bruno*. He was equally at ease behind the wheel of the *Arias* as he was paddling about on a rescue board.

Elmer was all in for the Club, whether picking up a shovel to help excavate the boathouse for its new foundation, or completing a Fort Point swim (after a rigorous night of training at The Saloon and the Grant and Green). He was always ready to row the *Weiland* to Sam's for brunch with a half dozen seasoned Dolphins, a case of beer, and a few tubs of Vaseline to keep the leaky vessel afloat. Water Pigs quaked at his sight in the Trans Tahoe Relay Swim. Elmer was the cheerful guide to a magical spring of beer that would flow at the Santa Cruz Pier Swim BBQ from the mini keg that we would bury in the sand before the sun came up and the park rangers came on station.

I will miss our epic swims to the flag (and back), lunches at Joe's, the search for the perfect milkshake, and nightly beverage photo ops. We were a couple of Dolphins who loved what our city, and this club, had to offer—a place to make friends and develop deep, lasting relationships. That's what the Club gave me and Elmer. I truly hope that each of you will find such joy in our special Club.

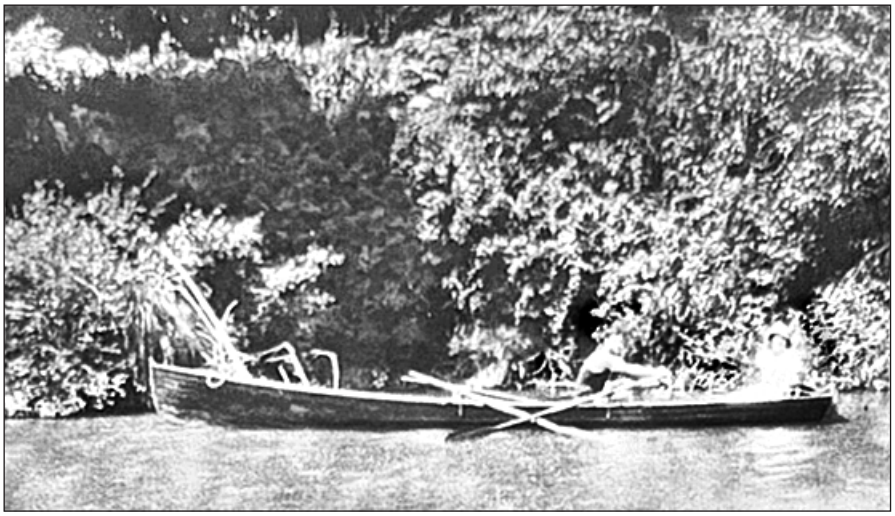
The Untold Story of the *Viking*

by Richard Cooper

The Dolphin Club is proud of its fleet of historic rowboats, hand-crafted from wood, some more than a century old but still used daily. The fleet consists of twenty such boats, and their histories have been documented in every detail just as if they were rare, classic automobiles. However, the pedigree of one special boat, *Viking*, was missing, lost decades ago along with some other Club records. Who built it? When? How did the Club acquire it? Only vague stories had been passed down and often repeated, indeed becoming legendary.

According to the legend, in the early 1900s several unknown carpenters working in the Washington-Mason Street cable car barn built a two-man rowing boat in their spare time. It then spent years on the Russian River. Upon the death of an owner, not identified, it was donated to the Dolphin Club in the 1930s, some said 1950s.

The legend contained clues, but systematic detective work would be needed to discover the real story. The search turned to public sources including old newspapers and other publications, the Maritime Library, the San Francisco Public Library History Room, Bancroft Library, and anyone who might have information. For a month or more the effort was frustrating, but then a breakthrough came in an article found in the May 4, 1943, issue of the *San Francisco Chronicle*. It mirrored the legend by describing the unique boat, its use on the Russian River, and the donation to the Club. Also, the article identified the owner, a Dolphin Club member. Finally, with a date and name in hand, the Club archives proved productive. Also, public sources were revisited. Genealogy websites provided birth and death records, census records, and city directories. Several living descendants were traced and interviewed.



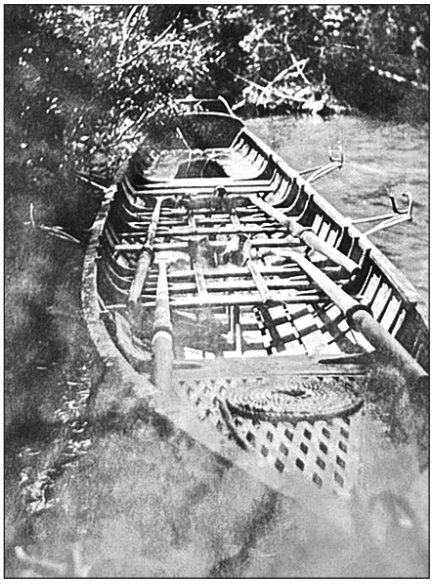
The Harris Family photo album showing the Viking on the Russian River

The loss of many records in the 1906 earthquake and fire limited this research, but here are the findings: James Harris built the boat with his sons in 1900, or a few years earlier, in the California Street Cable Railroad building on the southwest corner of California and Hyde Streets. James Harris was born in 1847, a native of Pictou, Nova Scotia, Canada. The 1879 Pictou Directory and 1881 Census of Canada stated his occupation as "Boat Builder." In 1885, his family emigrated to San Francisco. Here he was a carpenter, repairing cable cars between 1886 and 1906. James became a member of the Dolphin Club along with two of his sons, William and Thomas. The sons rowed on championship crews in the early 1900s, and their names are honored on several Club trophies. Later they both served as presidents. William F. Harris died while Club president in 1911 at age 34 from typhoid fever, after rescuing a person in Richardson Bay.

In 1942 a fire destroyed the summer home of Thomas Harris on the lower Russian River near Guerneville. His boat, a 22-foot pleasure gig, survived, and in 1943 Thomas donated it to the Dolphin Club. Thomas W. Harris passed away in 1950 at age 68.

Possibly the Harris family chose the name *Viking* for Nova Scotia with its Viking past, and the design, a long sleek gig, for their Scottish heritage. *Viking* was unique, quite different from other boats in the Dolphin Club fleet which were either heavier, utilitarian doubles or light, fragile racing boats. *Viking* soon became a much-admired craft on San Francisco Bay, but there were no others like her to compete in regattas. Until, in the late 1970s, nearby rowing clubs commissioned replica boats, and a new class was born, the Cable Car Gig. May the legend live on.

For more about *Viking* today: *https://archive.org/details/dc-viking-and-her-descendants*



Our Wooden Boats Wow the Judges at the Boat Show

By Nanda Palmieri

Since 2019, the Dolphin Club has participated in the Master Mariners Wooden Boat Show, held each June at the Corinthian Yacht Club in Tiburon. This year, Club members Diane Jackson, John Thorpe, Jon Bielinski, Liz Donahoe, Scott Simmons and myself rowed two wooden Dolphin doubles to the show — the *James L. Cronin* and *Lawton C Hughes*. The boats wowed attendees and judges, and brought home a prize: Honorable Mention for Best Preservation Effort. In an article published in *Latitude 38*, one of the judges, John "Woody" Skoriak, describes the boats as "Absolutely exquisite. And they are used daily, year-round! Unbelievable. They looked like they were brand new." The two doubles were built for the Dolphin Club by boatbuilder Bill Richards in 1938, and restored by Jon Bielinski in the 1980s/1990s. They are kept in fantastic working condition in the DC boat shop by the two Club boatbuilders, Jon Bielinski and Julia Hechanova, along with many, many volunteers.

Dolphin Club Swim Results – Summer 2025

Coghlan Beach—April 26, 2025

We had perfect conditions for a swim–the sun was shining, the current was strong, and the wind was mild. All 61 swimmers enjoyed a great push from the flood, and the first place finish was under 19 minutes!

Thank you to all the volunteers and pilots who made the swim possible.

Place	Name	Swim time	LCP
1	Joby Bernstein	18:48	10
2	Lissi Knell	19:11	9
3	Matt Korman	19:24	8
4	Ben Zovickian	19:39	7
5	Henry Saunders	19:45	6
6	Lauren Brinkmeyer	20:11	5
7	Juliet Cox	20:58	4
8	Stephen Balhoff	21:02	3
9	Steve Schatz	21:12	2
10	Bill Gardner	21:35	1
11	Jeff Citron	21:54	
12	Kim Gorcyca	22:05	
13	Steve Carlson	22:45	
14	Tovia Sobel	23:00	
15	Sean Lavelle	23:18	
16	Anna Schatz	23:20	
17	Don Thornburg	23:47	
18	Logan Craig	23:55	
19	Katrina Garry	24:11	
20	Elizabeth Mayer	25:10	
21	Beth Stein	25:27	
22	Danny Wohlner	25:32	
23	Ernst Halperin	25:46	
24	Eric Wind	25:50	
25	Bobby Lu	26:08	
26	David O'Reilly	26:18	
27	Michael Halby	26:24	
28	Brandon Esenther	26:50	
29	Chris Igo	26:59	
30	Daniel Silva	27:03	
31	Elizabeth Ozer	27:04	
32	Lindzy Bivings	27:08	
33	Denise Sauerteig	27:15	
34	Marci Glazer	27:18	
35	Nancy Hornor	27:21	
36	Chloe Noonan	27:30	
37	Liam Ronan	27:36	
38	Tommaso Trionfi	27:40	
39	Georgii Barber	27:52	
40	Laure Darcy	27:56	
41	Haile Kampman	27:59	
42	Peter Bostelmann	28:16	
43	Holly Reed	28:32	
44	Lisa Domitrovich	28:47	
45	Andy Stone	28:54	
46	Pete Neubauer	29:09	
47	Peter Cullinan	29:15	
48	Kathleen Duffy	29:18	
49	Bobby Carp	29:34	
50	John Hornor	29:51	
51	Hal Offen	30:28	
52	Farrah Spott	30:50	
53	Jim Frew	31:08	
54	Vicki Stolberg	31:28	
55	Eliana Agudelo	32:23	
56	Arnie Thompson	32:36	
57	Phil Gaal	32:54	
58	Clara Ault	33:01	
59	Kati Hopman	33:26	
60	Ashley Hazel	34:00	
61	Sheila Gleeson	34:04	

Pilots

Lead Pilot: Ben Chun
Lead Swim Commissioner: Alex Kroeger

Tim McElligott, Maeve Lavelle, Ben Chun, KC Crowell, Alex Kroeger, Heather Kremer, Josefina McAuliffe-Rocha, Ellen Offermann, Damian Guenzing, Dave Buchanan, Dean Badessa, Barry Christian, Tom McCall, Brian Kiernan, Diane Walton, Matt Stromberg, Tom Corcoran, Ryan Dalton, Rebecca Tilley, Jeffrey Tong, Ken Coren, Jon Bielinski, David Wagner, Miranda Rouse, Nanda Palmieri, John Thorpe, Heather Warm, Maggie Lonergan, David Zovickian, Kelsey Dean, Erika Giste, Joshua Loman, Chris Kocher, Tony Foe, Connor Clark, Allison Arnold, James Dilworth

Volunteers

Alix Marduel, Sue Garfield, Mark Lenz, Zach Del Duca, Diana Pray, Julia Peterson, Erika Kettleson, Merryl Levy, Robin Rome, Scott Simmons, Chris Kelly, Rob Blum, Emily Nogue, Andrew Cunningham, Christophe Crombez, Diane Campbell, Mike Thoreson, Sue Robbins, Andrew Cassidy, Tom Hunt, Tamar Besson, Elizabeth Mayer, Elizabeth Ozer, Sheila Gleeson, Kathleen Duffy, Vicki Stolberg, Ashley Hazel, Lisa Domitrovich, Anne Diedrich, Nanda Palmieri, Monica Savini, Ken Schwarz, Eric Shupert, Lauren Brinkmeyer, Lissi Knell, Anna Schatz, Steve Schatz, Lorna Newlin, Andrew Dietrich, Scott Halsted, Anne Hamersky, Henrietta Scholars, Kathy Wallace, John Henderson, Sarah Mulchand, Fiona Donald, Eva Adamson

Test Swim

Alex Kroeger, Ben Chun, Maeve Lavelle, Marci Glazer, Steve Carlson, Madeleine Crow, Jim Frew, Nancy Hornor, Sunny Mckee, Beth Stein, Michael Tschantz-Hahn, Heather Kremer, Dean Badessa, Ryan Dalton, Diane Campbell, Rebecca Tilley

Walt Schneebeli Over 60 Cove Swim—May 10, 2025

The annual over 60 cove swim is named in honor of Walt Schneebeli, a Dolphin Club member who joined in 1948 and swam in the cove for nearly 80 years.

The weather was excellent for this swim–sunshine and very little wind. There was a fairly strong push from a flood in the cove, so the courses ran clockwise.

We had three different course options this year:

1. to the second buoy and back
2. to the flag and back, and
3. a full cove

58 Dolphins came out to swim and everyone made it back to the dock. Many swam out on the buoy line with inner tubes and enjoyed the free ride back to the club from the flood. Some folks remarked that it was odd swimming along Hyde Street Pier without the familiar sight of the Balclutha, Thayer, and Eppleton Hall.

Thank you to all the volunteers and pilots who made the swim possible.

Walt Schneebeli Swim Results, cont.

Pilots

Lead Swim Commissioner: Alex Kroeger

Kelsey Dean, Erika Giste, Joshua Loman, Brian Kiernan, Robin Hart, Katrina Garry, Joey Murphy, Ken Coren, Era Osibeg

Volunteers

Derrick Rebello, Sue Garfield, Kathy Wallace, John Hornor, Juilia Peterson, Bobby Lu, Eva Adamson, Holly Reed, Steve Schatz, Scott Halsted, Miranda Rouse, Maeve Lavelle, Beth Stein, Chris Igo, Dave HK, Kim Gorcyca, Ben Clark, Lorna Newlin, Peter Neubauer, Dana Watt, Anne Hamersky

Swimmers

Norman Degelman, Kathleen Duffy, Lawrence Remstedt, Paul Wolf, Ernst Halperin, Kelley Heye, Jennifer Weller, Janice Wood, Diane Walton, Fiona McCusker, Joe Ferrero, Peter Cullinan, Monica Towers, Bob McKenzie, Robin Rome, Kathy Wallace, Cheryl Wallace, Pia Hinckle, Lorna Newlin, Andrew Ach, Nancy Hornor, Chris Igo, Diane Campbell, Dorian Dunne, John Henderson, Vicki Stolberg, Sandy Bardas, Laura Merkl, Morgan Kulla, Phil Rollins, Will Powning, Anne Sasaki, Alix Marduel, Chris Kocher, Don Thornburg, Sarah McCuskey, Mark Lenz, Margaret Keenan, Krist Jake, John Lennox, John Hornor, Sheila Gleeson, Eileen David, Jeff Citron, Jeffrey Tong, Keith Nelson, Neal Powers, Beth Stein, Mary Cantini, Raphael Noz, Joni Beemsterboer, Daragh Powers, DJ Niccolls, Hal Offen, Catherine Singstad, Anne Hamersky, Peter Neubauer, Phil Gaal

Yacht Harbor—May 25, 2025

We had less than ideal conditions with wind speeds over 14 knots which lead to our LP deciding to reroute the swim to an inside/outside + cove. The conditions were rough; we had about 20 people finish the whole course, and we had the remaining swimmers do an adjusted route from there. We had all our motor craft out as well as most of our pilots to ensure the safety of everyone. Considering all the adjustments, it was a good swim!

Place	Swimmers Name	Swim Time	LCP
1	Allison	Arnold	33:49
1	Felicia	Lee	33:49
3	Lissi	Knell	37:11
4	Mackenzie	Kirk	37:44
5	Kalani	Leifer	40:11
6	David	Holscher	40:19
7	Marlin	Gilbert	40:37
8	Thorston	Anderson	44:25
9	Stephen	Balhoff	44:07
10	Juliet	Cox	44:54
11	Lawrence	Remstedt	45:22

Place	Swimmers Name	Swim Time	LCP
12	Denise	Sauertieg	46:47
13	Jeff	Citron	47:23
14	Ben	Clark	48:50
15	Steve	Schatz	49:30
16	Anna	Schatz	50:06
17	Hannah	Holscher	50:11
18	Pete	Cullinan	56:03
19	Edwin	Purselle	56:36
20	Heather	Warm	58:28
21	Rebecca	Groves	82:00

Pilots

Lead Pilot:Ramsey Williams
Lead Swim Commissioner: Lindsay Stripling

Blair Adamson, Susan Allen, Jon Bielinski, David Buchanan, Sara Chang, Paul Chong, Ben Chun, Madeleine Crow, Joe Gannon, Erin Gasser, Erika Giste, Damian Guenzing, Lewis Haidt, Stephen Hattwick, Terry Horn, Diane Jackson, Brian Kiernan, Maeve Lavelle, Charmaine Leonard, Joshua Loman, Dominic Lusinchi, Tom McCall, Abby Mohan, Nanda Palmieri, Will Powning, Antoine Roux, Gina Rus, Kathleen Sheridan, Ally Sillins, Scott Simmons, Andy Stone, Peter Strietmann, Jeffrey Tong, Diane Walton, Ramsey Williams, Eric Wind, David Zovickian

Helpers

Thorsten Anderson, Stephen Balhoff, Cynthia Barnard, Joni Beemsterboer, Robert Blum, Diane Campbell, Mary Cantini-Norkin, Andrew Cassidy, Ken Coren, Juliet Cox, Christophe Crombez, Peter Cullinan, Lisa Domitrovich, Joe Ferrero, Jim Frew, Ernst Halperin, Anne Hamersky, John Henderson, Pia Hinckle, Kati Hopman, John Hornor, Jessica Huang, Carolyn Hui, Chris Igo, Chris Kelly, Paul Kretkowski, Jean Lamming, Felicia Lee, Merryl Levy, Alix Marduel, David O'Reilly, Lawrence Remstedt, Jennifer Rogers, Eric Shupert, Tovia Sobel, Farrah Spott, Rebecca Tilley, Dana Watt, Janice Wood

Test Swim

Lewis Haidt, Alix Marduel, Kathleen Sheridan, Tovia Sobel, Amanda Ernzer, Diane Jackson, Dominic Lusinchi, Kristoffer Milonas

John Nogue Pier 15 Swim—June 14, 2025

In relatively calm conditions, we celebrated John Nogue's spirit and legacy with a fast swim from Pier 15. Emily and Sofie Nogue joined us on the Adventure Cat, and oversaw all 54 swimmers completing the 2-mile route. Emily related a sentiment from one of John's journals about coming to the Dolphin Club to swim, but staying for the people. After the day's events, we all shared this feeling..

Pilots

Lead Pilot: Nathaniel Berger
Lead Swim Commissioner: Ben Chun

Lilian Tsai, Dominic Lusinchi, Nanda Palmieri, John Thorpe, Scott Simmons, Jon Bielinski, Diane Jackson, Tony Foe, Alice Ma, Tom McCall, Will Powning, Barry Christian, Evan Hirsch, Dave Zovickian, Cathy Huang, Danny Wohlner, Daniel Cavey, Otto Williams, David Buchanan, Emily Pimentel, Terry Horn, Stephen Hattwick, Felicia Lee, Brian Kiernan, Bobby Carp, Mickey Lavelle, John Robiola, Tim McElligott, Mike Walsh, Nathaniel Berger, Steve Hagler, Maeve Lavelle, Mackenzie Kirk, Steve Carlson, Gina Rus, Ben Chun

Volunteers

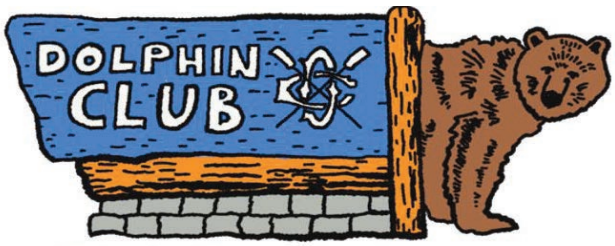
Derrick Rebello, Jessica Huang , Sue Garfield, Pia Hinckle, Carolyn Hui, John Hornor, Nancy Hornor, Sam Maslin, Bobby Lu, Robin Hart, Chris Kelly, Tamar Besson, Ellen Hathaway, Ashley Hazel, Tommaso Trionfi, Nancy Booth, James Glasnapp, Chloe Noonan, Daniel Silva, David Holscher, Hannah Holscher, Joby Bernstein, Lewis Haidt, Kathleen Duffy, Kim Gorcyca, Tom Neill, Andrew Cassidy, Aaron Rosenthal, Duke Dahlin, Emily Schmitz, Ben Zovickian, Denise Sauerteig, Sophie Nogue, Keith Gray, Logan Craig, Teddy Chivetta, Nick Churcher, Alisha Kewalramani, Rebecca Groves, Ed Nunez

Test Swim

Dominic Lusinchi, Wafaa Sabil, Daniel Cavey, Forrest Carroll, Brooke Blume, Nathaniel Berger, Alex Kroeger, Damian Guenzing, David Buchanan, Kathleen Sheridan, Maile Smith, Gina Rus, Steve Carlson, Denise Saurteig, Ben Chun

John Nogue Pier 15 Swim Results, cont.

Place	Name	Swim time	LCP
1	Joby	Bernstein	0:31:25
2	Allison	Arnold	0:31:28
3	Jessica	Huang	0:32:24
4	Ben	Zovickian	0:33:52
5	Lissi	Knell	0:34:07
6	Dominick	Kirk	0:35:32
7	Amanda	Ernzer	0:36:48
8	Alex	Kroeger	0:36:50
9	Steve	Schatz	0:36:53
10	David	Holscher	0:37:20
11	Emily	Schmitz	0:37:29
12	Ken	Schwarz	0:37:59
13	Thorsten	Anderson	0:38:10
14	Kim	Gorcyca	0:38:15
15	Taylor	Nanfria	0:38:24
16	Tor	Lundgren	0:39:24
17	Joe	Dinan	0:40:45
18	Hannah	Holscher	0:40:56
19	Sean	Lavelle	0:41:22
20	Georgie	Alcock	0:41:26
21	Heather	Warm	0:41:45
22	rohin	daswani	0:42:22
24	Lawrence	remstedt	0:42:44
23	Tom	Reynolds	0:43:15
25	Virginie	Eskenazi	0:44:06
26	Clara	Ault	0:44:27
27	Beth	Stein	0:44:47
28	margaret	keenan	0:44:52
29	George	Chamales	0:45:32
30	Megan	wachs	0:45:46
31	Tom	Neill	0:46:20
32	Miguel	Gonzalez	0:48:11
33	Daniel	Silva	0:48:48
34	Connor	Clark	0:49:22
35	Chloe	Noonan	0:49:45
36	Maxwell	Audette	0:50:11
37	Damian	Guenzing	0:50:17
38	Nancy	Hornor	0:50:28
39	Gretchen	Coffman	0:50:42
40	Pia	Hinckle	0:50:43
41	Brooke	Wentz	0:51:12
42	Robert	Blum	0:51:24
43	John	Melcher	0:51:51
44	Lisa	Domitrovich	0:52:18
45	Kathleen	Duffy	0:52:29
46	Peter	Cullinan	0:52:36
47	John	Hornor	0:53:23
48	Julia	Brashares	0:54:00
49	Donna	Schumacher	0:54:11
50	Aaron	Rosenthal	0:55:12
51	Lewis	Haidt	0:55:26
52	Kati	Hopman	0:56:25
53	Carolyn	Hui	0:57:11
54	Keith	Nelson	0:57:00



Grizzly Bear Challenge

The Grizzly Bear Challenge is an annual winter event at the Dolphin Club, where members aim to erg 100,000 meters on rowing machines (ergs) between Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve. It's a test of endurance and dedication, with members often exceeding the 100,000-meter goal. The challenge is not a race but a personal goal, encouraging members to stay active during the holiday season.

Name	Distance	Name	Distance
Mark Cullen	723,000	Christine Sutcliffe	109,500
Corey Masao Johnson	403,827	Chris Kocher	108,500
Daniel Marshall	292,955	David Brownstein	107,621
Tom O'Connell	250,000	Riley Culligan	104,773
Marlin Gilbert	190,000	Laura Zovickian	102,500
Fiona Smythe	147,674	Maryann Murphy	102,109
Jonathan Vaknin	139,970	Luke Rajlich	101,354
Natazha Bernie	139,950	Joey Gracey	101,110
Maile Smith	131,631	Arnie Thompson	100,500
Andrew Dunbar	128,121	Zack McCune	100,500
Robert Larson	125,967	Dorian Faust	100,097
Rebecca Isaacs	111,564	Ally Sillins	100,000
Roger Hansen	110,533		

Wall Stack Challenge

The Walt Stack Challenge happens every year after the Polar Bear swim season and runs from March 22nd until May 31st. Walt Stack was one of the Dolphin Club's most beloved members and was an avid runner, regularly seen running and waving across the Golden Gate Bridge. His motto was "Start slow, then taper off" which we love and try to abide by. To accomplish a "Tall" stack you must run 225 miles during the challenge. A "Short" stack requires 100 miles during the same period. This is a great way to avoid "square withdrawal."

Tall Stack Finishers – 225M

Name	Miles	Name	Miles
Paul Wais	687.94	Tom McGraw	288.3
Marlin Gilbert	485	Stan Ades	258.83
Lolly Lewis	359.33	Eric Wind	240
Michelle Jew	342.67	Derrick Rebello	238
Jonathan Vaknin	334.67	Marie Sayles	233
Katrina Garry	311.57	Joey Gracey	231.65
Gabriella Wong	308.6	Randy Edwards	227
Erika Giste	305	Clay Tucker	225.77

Short Stack Finishers – 100M

Name	Miles	Name	Miles
Riley Culligan	218.44	Diane Walton	130
John Gibbon	204.59	Dave Malong	120
Kelley Heye	195.7	Gina Bianucci Rus	119.7
Joey Murphy	185.41	Sunny McKee	118
Sue Garfield	180	Alisha Kewalramani	115.5
Madeleine Crow	176.72	Deanna Micros	115
Kati	170	Madhuri	115
Nick Churcher	158	Ruby Lipscomb	110
KLB	140	Heather Rhide	110
Beth Stein	140	Sean Lavelle	110
Bret Dougherty	137.88		

	Finishers	Miles
Total Short Stack	15	5,077.53
Total Tall Stack Finishers	20	3069.94
Totals	35	8,147.47

Photo: Jana Ašenbrennerová

2025 Polar Bear Champion Oliver Fader and Swim Commissioner Ben Chun

2024-2025 Polar Bear Results

* First to forty

** 47 consecutive Polar Bears

First	Last	Miles	First	Last	Miles
Oliver	Fader	200	Jamie	Robinson	50
Christophe	Crombez	115	Carter	Seddon	50
Tom	Neill	102	Joe	Spallone	50
Stephen	Balhoff	87	Tamara	Straus	50
Michael	Tschantz-Hahn	82.75	Heather	Warm	50
Kalani*	Leifer	80	Adam	Goldberg	49
Ben	Hu	75	John	Mervin	49
Ted	Tilles	75	Jean-Marc	Nugent	48
Amanda	Ernzer	69	Steve	Hanson	46.75
Thorsten	Anderson	67	Matt	Johnson	45.75
Alice	Ma	65	Vince**	Huang	45
Maryann	Murphy	65	Sean	Lavelle	45
Perjmun	Haghighi	62	Phillip	Scarborough	45
John	Ottersberg	62	Rebecca	Tilley	45
Neal	Powers	61.5	Eliana	Agudelo	44
Andrew	Wynn	61	Erik	Cufino	44
Tatyana	Ovcharova	60.5	Colin	McMahon	45
Randy	Edwards	60	Egon	Terplan	43.5
Pia	Hinckle	60	Henry	Dombey	43.25
Mike	Morales	60	Daniel	Handler	43
Barnaby	Payne	60	Pieter	Kruit	43
Elaine	Van Vleck	60	Felicia	Lee	43
Peter	Cullinan	59.5	Elizabeth	Mayer	43
Kati	Hopman	58	Daniel	Ryan	43
Tony	Payne	57	Kellen	Dammann	42.75
Gary	Arabatyan	56.5	Keith	Gray	42.5
Lawrence	Remstedt	56	Mike T	Walsh	42.5
Kristoffer	Milonas	55	Mackenzie	Kirk	42
Mike	Thoresen	55	Larry	Scroggins	42
Arnie	Oji	54.5	Kristen	Steck	42
Bill	Gardner	54	Madhuri	Yechuri	42
Caius	Vannouhuys	53.25	Alex	Buehlmann	41.5
Kamran	Atabai	53	Jill	Rice	41.5
Anna	Schatz	53	Kim	Harris	41.25
John	Stassen	53	Eric	Boyle	41
Steve	Schatz	52.5	Nick	Dolce	41
Jonathan	DePriest	52	Lisa	Domitrovich	41
Jeff	Citron	51.5	Morgan	Kulla	41
Steve	Carlson	51	Juan	Tellez	41
Karin	Christensen	51	Mike J	Walsh	41
Heather	Kremer	51	Joni	Beemsterboer	40.5
Catherine	Singstad	51	Brooke	Blume	40.5
Fasica	Alemayehu	50.5	Ben	Chun	40.5
Peter	Badertscher	50	Zachary	Del Duca	40.5
Laura	Burtch Zovickian	50	Anders	Dillan	40.5
John	Gibbon	50	James	Glasnapp	40.5
Tor	Lundgren	50	Daid	Holscher	40.5
Elizabeth	Ozer	50	Pejman	Moshfegh	40.5
Tony	Phillips	50	D	Nielsen	40.5
Will	Powning	50	David	O'Reilly	40.5

Polar Bar Results, cont.

First	Last	Miles	First	Last	Miles
Eric	Reed	40.5	Jeanne	Hallacy	27.5
Miranda	Rouse	40.5	Anne	Barbaret	27.25
Nikolas	Tomasevic	40.5	Jeffrey	Tong	26
Daniel	Rosario	40.25	Joe	Gannon	25
Allison	Arnold	40	Keith	Howell	25
Peter	Bartu	40	Lolly	Lewis	25
Joel	Bleskacek	40	Michael	Matthay	25
Peter	Bostelmann	40	Robin	Rome	25
Tom	Brown	40	Kate	Matthay	24.75
Michael	Caniglia	40	Stuart	Moulder	24.5
Bobby	Carp	40	Ernst	Halperin	24.5
Lindsey	Collins	40	Bob	Tandler	24
Logan	Craig	40	James	Bennan	24
Ryan	Dalton	40	Rusa	Chiu	23.75
Kathleen	Duffy	40	Nancy	Lange	23
Brandon	Esenther	40	Peter	Neubauer	23
Jak	Fa	40	Monica	Towers	23
Erin	Gasser	40	Gabriella	Cross	22.3
Humaira	Ghilzai	40	Dorian	Dunne	22.25
Marlin	Gilbert	40	George	Robin	22.25
Miguel	Gonzalez	40	Terry	Horn	22
Kim	Gorcyca	40	Kevin	McAlea	22
Damian	Guenzing	40	Beth	Stein	22
Robin	Hart	40	Joe	Mannion	21.75
David	Hua	40	Daragh	Powers	21.75
Brian	Johnson	40	Theresa	Kolish	21.5
Mickey	Lavelle	40	Aniko	Kurczinak	21.5
Jean-Marc	Lelu	40	Tom	McGraw	21.5
Bianca	Liederer	40	Chris	Igo	21.25
Emily	Ozer	40	Hal	Offen	21.25
Derrick	Rebello	40	Kevin	Shanahan	21.25
Holly	Reed	40	Greg	Amoroso	21
Aaron	Rosenthal	40	Ken	Coren	21
Brendan	Sheehan	40	Nancy	Hornor	21
Laura	Vartain Horn	40	Natazha	Raine O'Connor	21
John	Hornor	34.75	Wolf	Richter	21
Laura	Merkl	34.5	Rebecca	Smith-Bindman	21
Ken	Miller	34	Deb	Sullivan	21
Claire	Perry	33.5	Kathy	Wallace	20.75
Ruby	Lipscomb	32	Peter	de Castro	20.5
Mike	Smith	32	Anne	Sasaki	20.5
Christine	Varon	31	Krist	Jake	20.25
Julie	Haas	30	Michaelynn	Meyers	20.25
Elspeth	Farmer	30	Dulke	Dahlin	20
Sunny	McKee	29.25	John	Dugan	20
Stu	Gannes	29	Jim	Emery	20
Andy	Stone	29	Sue	Garfield	20
Diane	Campbell	28	Anne	Hamersky	20
Joanne	Sakai	27.8	Mara	Iaconi	20
Denise	Dugan	27.5	Beth	Ohanneson	20
Jim	Frew	27.5	Mark	Robinson	20

Our Changing Cove

The *Eppleton Hall* prepares for relocation

The *Balclutha* leaves the Cove through the Opening

The newly naked Hyde Street Pier

Vallela Vallela invade the beach

The Dolphin Swimming
& Boating Club
502 Jefferson Street
San Francisco, CA 94109

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2025 DOLPHIN CLUB SWIM & EVENT SCHEDULE

Event	Day	Date	Current/Tide (Gg)	Jump
*New Year's Day Alcatraz**	WED	1 Jan	09:42 1.7kn F	07:00
New Year's Day Cove	WED	1 Jan		09:00
*Pier 41**	SUN	2 Feb	05:30 2.0kn E	07:30
Valentine's Day Singles Regatta	SAT	15 Feb		
Old Timers' Lunch	SUN	16 Feb		
*Gashouse Cove**	SAT	1 Mar	09:54 1.8kn F	08:30
End of Polar Bear	FRI	21 Mar		
Start of Walt Stack Challenge	SAT	22 Mar		
*Pier 39**	SAT	22 Mar	08:54 1.5kn E	08:00
Blackaller Buoy Run	SUN	13 Apr		
*Coghlan Beach**	SAT	26 Apr	09:12 1.6kn F	08:30
Walt Schneebeli Over-60 Cove	SAT	10 May		07:00
Master Mariners Regatta	SAT	24 May		
*Yacht Harbor**	SUN	25 May	09:24 1.6kn F	09:00
End of Walt Stack Challenge	SAT	31 May		
Start of 100 Mile Swim	SUN	1 Jun		
McCovey Cove Mixer	SAT	7 Jun		
*John Nogue Swim For Science - Pier 15**	SAT	14 Jun	05:18 2.3kn E	07:00
*Pride Swim**	SUN	22 Jun	08:24 1.4kn F	
Angel Island Picnic & Overnight	SAT	28 Jun		
*Bay Bridge**	SUN	13 Jul	05:12 2.5kn E	07:00
Alcatraz Regatta	SUN	20 Jul		
*China Beach***	SUN	10 Aug	11:00 1.8kn F	07:30
*Santa Cruz 1 Mile**	SAT	16 Aug		
*Santa Cruz 2 Mile**	SUN	17 Aug		
*Doc Howard 45+ Swim**	SAT	23 Aug	10:42 2.0kn F	11:00
*Ft. Point**	SUN	7 Sep	09:48 1.8kn F	07:30
Escape from Alcatraz Tri (EFAT)	SUN	14 Sep	09:06 0.9kn E	06:45
Swim Across America	SUN	21 Sep		
Alcatraz	SUN	28 Sep	08:30 0.7kn E	07:00
*DC/SE Interclub Tri**	SAT	4 Oct		
Joe Bruno Golden Gate	SAT	25 Oct	06:24 0.9kn E	09:15
End of 100 Mile Swim	FRI	31 Oct		
Angel Island Regatta	SAT	1 Nov		
Veterans Day Swim (Cove)	SAT	8 Nov		08:00
Pilot Appreciation Dinner	SAT	8 Nov		
Thanksgiving Day Cove	THU	27 Nov		
New Year's Day Qualifier & Holiday Brunch	SUN	14 Dec		08:00
Start of Polar Bear	SUN	21 Dec		

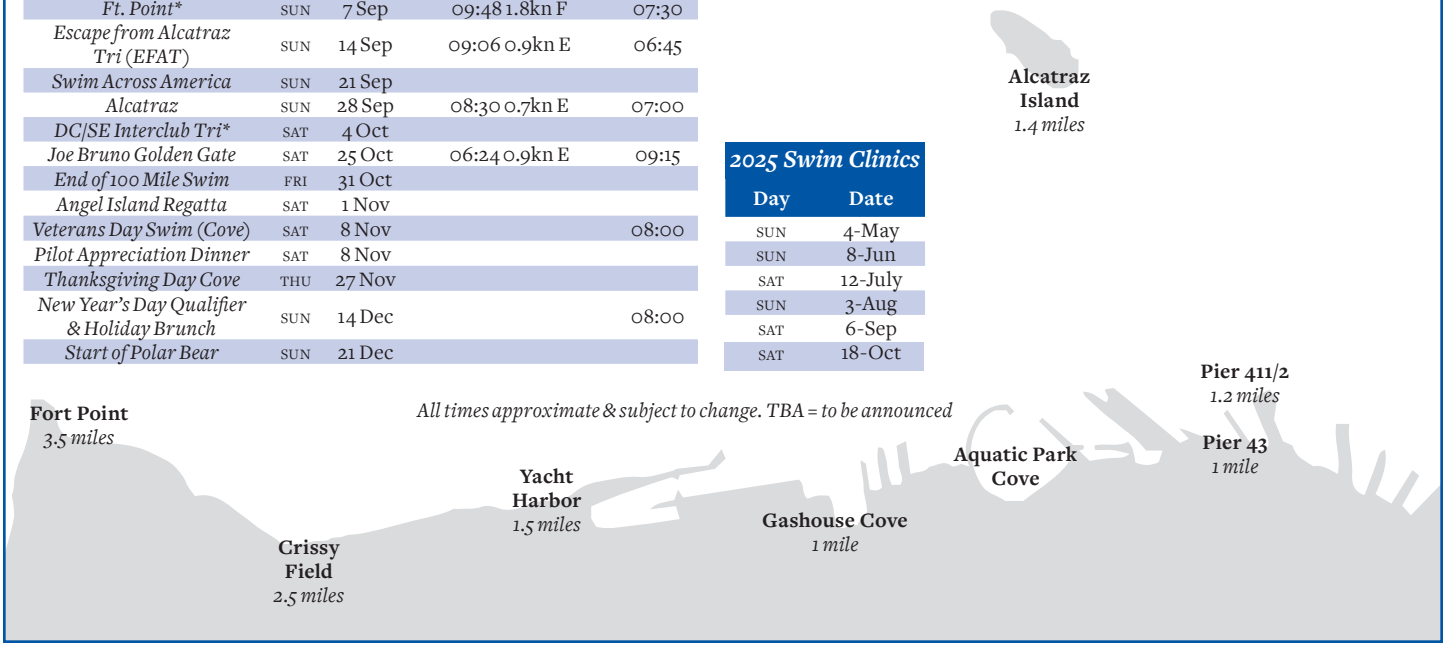
Swim Program Rules

1. Club scheduled swims are restricted to Club members, who are current on their dues and fees and in good standing.
2. Swimmers must have current USMS membership, and abide by each organization's rules and requirements.
3. Swimmers are required to wear orange caps on all scheduled swims.
4. Swimmers cannot use swim aids, including fins and wet suits, on any scheduled swims.
5. New members are not eligible to swim in scheduled out-of-cove swims for either 6 months from the start of their membership, or before successfully completing the 100-mile swim, the Polar Bear swim, or the Accelerated Out-of-Cove process.
6. All out-of-cove swims require a pilot:swimmer ratio of 1:3.
7. Time limits may be imposed at the discretion of the Swim Commissioner(s).
8. All Club boats are reserved for scheduled swims. Co-pilots are encouraged. Riders are prohibited.
9. Swimmers must register during check-in and attend the swim briefing in order to swim.
10. Swimmers must successfully complete at least two qualifying swims and help on at least three swims to qualify for Alcatraz and Golden Gate Swims.
11. Out-of-town members must have successfully completed two of the last three Club scheduled Alcatraz and/or Golden Gate swims or meet Rule 10 above.

(Nothing in the above rules shall contravene any applicable Federal laws and statutes.)

** Qualifying Swim. Need 2 qualifying swims + 3 helps to qualify for Golden Gate and/or Alcatraz.*
*** Requires special qualifier, details TBA*

2025 Swim Clinics	
Day	**Date**
SUN	4-May
SUN	8-Jun
SAT	12-July
SUN	3-Aug
SAT	6-Sep
SAT	18-Oct



All times approximate & subject to change. TBA = to be announced

DOLPHIN LOG

THE BULLETIN OF THE DOLPHIN SWIMMING & BOATING CLUB • SAN FRANCISCO • ESTABLISHED 1877 • FALL/WINTER 2025

Clockwise from top: San Francisco fire boat water display; Duke Dahlin and Diane Campbell; Nancy Hornor rocking her flag.

Veterans Day Swim

BY LARRY SCROGGINS

Three years ago, Duke Dahlin conceived a tribute to military veterans. Tom Callanan, a fellow Vietnam veteran, suggested that veterans were underappreciated at the Dolphin Club and asked Duke to do something about it. Naturally, Duke envisioned the appropriate tribute as an organized swim in the Aquatic Park Cove. Unfortunately, his health took a southward turn and he was no longer able to devote the time and energy required to make the tribute a reality. That's when Diane Campbell stepped in.

She had asked Duke what she could do to help him while he was under the weather. He shocked her by saying, "You can help me out by running the Veterans Day swim for me." Since Diane was new to the process of organizing a Club swim, she consulted the Swim Commissioners at the time. They offered savvy advice, "but they also made sure that I knew it was not a Club swim and they were not in charge."

In order to encourage as much participation as possible, the swim offers four different courses. As some of the participants are older veterans, one course is from the beach to the end of the dock and back. The longest course is a full cove. For safety purposes, someone ticks swimmers off a list as they finish, but it is not a competitive event and no one records times.

Several things distinguish this event from other Club swims. For one, Diane arranged for the San Francisco fireboat to make an appearance each year. Their immediate reply was, "Of course we'll be there. What time do you want us to come? How long do you want the water display?" And when they agree to come at 0945 hours, Diane says, "They come on the dot."

Duke and other volunteers greet the swimmers on the beach, handing out American flags. Diane says, "It makes it so festive! People are getting out and waving their flag. It's a sweet event."

Duke and Diane managed their third Veterans Day swim in November 2025. Going forward, the Swim Commissioners have agreed to undertake the Veterans Day swim as a formal annual Club event. This will allow the original organizers to better enjoy the day and focus their efforts on the decorations and food.

DOLPHIN LOG

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For a complete list of volunteers, see https://dolphinclub.groups.io/g/main/wiki/16357

COVER PHOTO
Robbie Bailey
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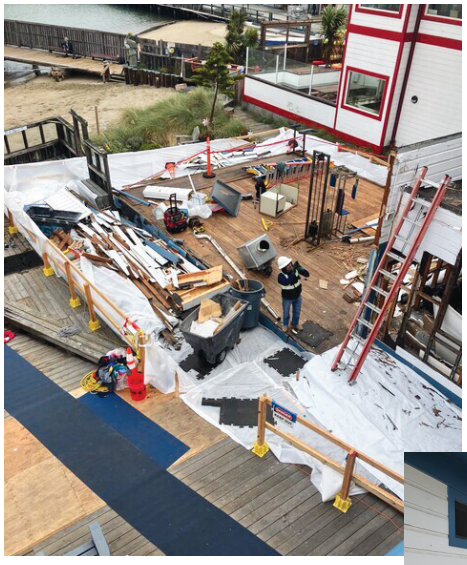
"EVEN TEMPLES NEED RENOVATION."

-- BHUWAN THAPALIYA



The walls come down

Temporary kitchen area

Temporary kitchen sink

A foundation to survive a tsunami

Weight room before demolition

Weight room without walls

The walls go up

Building inspector

Mens locker room ready for new lockers

FROM POLAR BEAR TO ICE SWIMMING

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO GET TOTALLY COLD

BY PIA HINCKLE

Pia Hinckle and Elaine Van Vleck sporting their competition-winning hats in the ice water at Lake Memphremagog

I opened my eyes in the dark and checked my clock: 4:40 am, exactly five minutes before my alarm was set to go off to get ready for my 6 am swim. I am always amazed that my body automatically wakes so insanely early after I spent my whole BS (Before Swimming) life sleeping as late as I could.

It's early February 2025 and I have been 60 years old for about a month, but since December 21 I have been swimming up to six times a week and sometimes, as I plan to today, six times a day — all in the absurd pursuit of my goal: to swim my age for this year's Polar Bear Challenge.

You may be reading this as a seasoned bear who has swum many more miles than that, or maybe you think you are too slow, too old, too scared, too (fill in the blank). Well, I'm here to tell you that no matter where you are starting from, even zero winter swimming: If I could do it, so can you.

If you had told me 10 years ago that I would be swimming before dawn in the Bay without even a neoprene cap and swimming 60 miles in the three months between December 21 and March 21, I woulda said you were crazy. Guess I'm the crazy one now.

It wasn't always so. I had been a Club member for 20 years before I got the courage and confidence to try my first out-of-cove swim. I hadn't swum in high school or college. I didn't consider myself a "strong" swimmer. I mostly sidestroked. And I had recurrent panic attacks triggered by the cold water that terrified and depressed me. I longed to be comfortable swimming in the bay I loved so much. I kept at it, and little by little, swim by swim, supported by a coach and Dolphin friends, I completed the 2014 Gas House Cove swim at age 49. Even then, my fears persisted, but I kept swimming. That year I made my lifelong dream to swim Alcatraz and the Golden Gate. And I kept swimming.

And still, reaching the 40-mile mark to qualify as a Polar Bear seemed out of reach. My usual swim was just a half mile — at that rate, how could I ever get enough squares on the big board? I was sure I didn't have the time. It wasn't until the winter of 2019 that I completed my first Polar Bear (42.5 miles!) and started to learn the secret to getting it done: planning.

How to Plan a Polar Bear

That fall, I mapped out the 90 days of Polar Bear, almost 13 weeks, on a physical calendar, noting holidays and travel when I couldn't swim. To get to 40 miles, I needed to swim at least three miles a week, which for me might be six half-mile swims or three 1-mile swims or four three-quarter-mile swims, or a mix of the three. Each week, I booked time for my swims.

PHOTO: ROBBIE BAILEY, WWW.BAILEYPHOTO.COM

In a notebook, I drew my own version of squares, divided week by week, so I could track my progress. Each week, I adjusted the following week's swim plan, depending on how much I needed to catch up. I made swimming four-five times a week a priority, stealing the hours from work and family. When illness or travel interfered, I made up for it with longer swims, more swims, and my first experiments with double dips (a regular 20-30 minute swim, sauna warmup and snack, followed by a 10-15 minute swim). I laid it all out on a spreadsheet.

Determination can get you to a Polar Bear, but to make it fun, you need friends. Luckily, the Club is a great source of approachable, inspiring lunatics. My go-to lunatic was Elaine Van Vleck, who also turned 60 this year. Together, we set winter swim goals for 2025: 60 Polar Bear miles, including six six-dip days, and six 60-minute swims. But that wasn't enough for us. We decided that we'd also do some spectacular ice swimming at the Lake Memphremagog Winter Swimming Festival in Vermont — wearing outrageous costumes.

Swimming a Six-Dip Day

When Elaine and I set 60 miles as our goal, I was intimidated. I honestly didn't see how I could do almost 20 more miles than my previous four Polar Bears. What better way to rack up the miles than swimming six times in a day, Elaine suggested. And why not do that six times to honor our 60th year, I countered. Encouragement from a friend, your pod, or someone in the sauna may be what helps you go beyond what you think you can do. That's what has worked for me.

Elaine is a genius at breaking down a complex swim into manageable bites. Her plan: toes in at 6 a.m. and swim for 30-60 minutes, then warm up and snack and back in again at 8 a.m. Repeat at 10 a.m., noon, 2 p.m., and take a final dip at 4 p.m. Having swum Suzie Dods' 24-Hr Swim Relay the last few years (a great introduction to night swimming and multi-dips), I understood how it was possible to swim multiple times and not get hypothermic — as long as you had enough snacks, warm drinks, dry bathing suits, and time to warm up.

We would arrive at 5:45, when it was silent and empty except for a couple of the regular pre-dawn swimmers. Then the rush and babble of mid-morning and noon swimmers before the quieting in the afternoon as the light faded from the sauna's windows. The Bay was dark and mostly calm before sunrise as we swam energetically with blinking lights clipped to our goggle straps; the wind would come up and slap us around in the afternoon when we were tired. Admittedly, swims 5 and 6 trended shorter than the ones earlier in the day. We invited anyone to join us, and some did, mostly enjoying a double or maybe a triple dip.

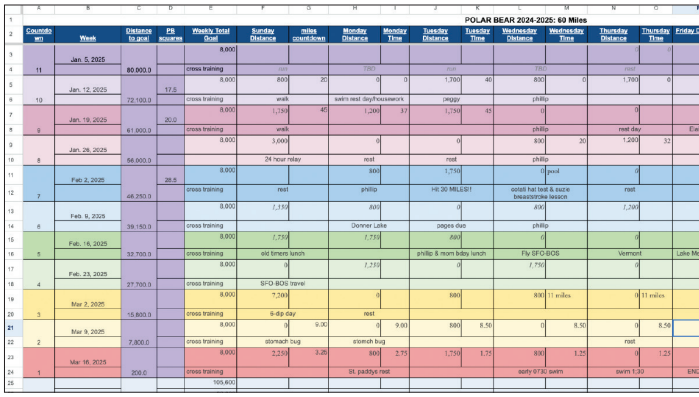
Of course, swim fashion was critical to morale and our success. Crissa Williams joined us for most of our dips, and the three of us coordinated our bathing suits and caps to match for different swim times: Garibaldis (by Hardcoresport) at 6; polar bear suits at 8, Deakin & Blue blue suits at 10. The deck of the Dolphin Club became our aquatic catwalk.

We got our technique down: swim, shower, dry off, and drink something warm in the sauna. Put on a dry bathing suit before leaving the sauna and then bundle up in layers. We would huddle around the heater in the Staib Room to eat snacks and chat until it was time to plunge in again.

From Polar Bear to Ice Swimming

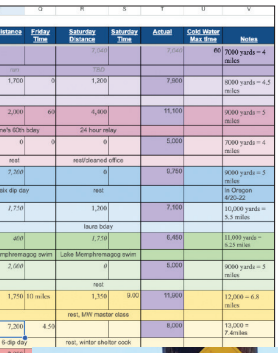
Now that you've swum a Polar Bear, as I first did in 2019, you might get curious, as I did, if you could do an ice swim. That's how, in 2024, I found myself, along with Elaine and Suzie Dods, in Newport, Vermont, at the Lake Memphremagog Winter Swimming Festival. The water in the two-lane, 25-meter pool cut into the ice of the frozen lake was 31 degrees. TOTALLY COLD, as they advertised.

To prepare, I had weaned myself off of my neoprene cap (not allowed in this event), which I had used since I first joined the Club. It was easier than I thought — once I realized it didn't keep me that much warmer than a single latex cap. To prepare for Vermont, my favorite swim roadie (my husband Chris Mittelstaedt) drove us to Donner Lake, and Elaine and Suzie and I did a double dip in the 30-something


POLAR BEAR 2024-2025: 60 Miles

Countdown	Week	Distance to goal	PB squares	Weekly Total Goal	Sunday Distance	miles countdown	Monday Distance	Monday Time	Tuesday Distance	Tuesday Time	Wednesday Distance	Wednesday Time	Thursday Distance	Thursday Time	Friday
				8,000											
11	Jan. 5, 2025	80,000.0		cross training	rest		TBD		rest		TBD		rest		
	Jan. 12, 2025		17.5	8,000	800	20	0	0	1,700	40	800	0	1,700	0	
10		72,100.0		cross training	walk		swim rest day/housework		peggy		phillip				
	Jan. 19, 2025		20.0	8,000	1,750	45	1,200	37	1,750	45	0		0		
9		61,000.0		cross training	walk						phillip		rest day		Ele
	Jan. 26, 2025			8,000	3,000		0		0		800	20	1,200	32	
8		56,000.0			24 hour relay		rest		rest		phillip				
	Feb 2, 2025		28.5	8,000			800		1,750		0 pool		0		
7		48,250.0		cross training	rest		phillip		HI 30 MILES!!		solati hat test & ssize breaststroke lesson		rest		
	Feb. 9, 2025			8,000	1,150		800		0		800		1,200		
6		39,150.0		cross training			Donner Lake		pages duo		phillip				
	Feb. 16, 2025			8,000	1,750		1,750		800		0		0		
5		32,700.0		cross training	old timers lunch				phillip & mom bday lunch		Fly SFO-BOS		Vermont		Lake M
	Feb. 23, 2025			8,000	0		1,750		0		1,750		0		
4		27,700.0		cross training	SFO-BOS travel										
	Mar 2, 2025			8,000	7,200		0		800		800 11 miles		11 miles		
3		15,800.0		cross training	6-dip day		rest								
	Mar 9, 2025			8,000	0 9:00		0 9:00		800	8:50	0	8:50	0	8:56	
2		7,800.0		cross training	stomach bug		stomach bug						rest		
	Mar 16, 2025			8,000	2,250	3.25	800	2.75	1,750	1.25	800	1.25	0	1.25	
1		200.0		cross training			St. paddys rest				early 0730 swim		swim 1.20		ENC
				105,600											

Clockwise from above: Elaine and Pia in Vermont; Determination will get you a Polar Bear but to make it fun, you need friends; Elaine and Pia in their 6am attire; The chart testifies to the 60 mile accomplishment; Pia relishing her victory at sea.



Friday Time	Saturday Distance	Saturday Time	Actual	Cold Water Max time	Notes
	7,560		7,560	60	7000 yards = 4 miles
rest	TBD				
1,700	1,200		7,900		8000 yards = 4.5 miles
2,000	4,800		11,100		9000 yards = 5 miles
	24 hour relay				
0	0		5,000		7000 yards = 4 miles
rest	rest/cleaned office				
7,300	0		9,760		9000 yards = 5 miles
six dip day	rest				in Oregon 6/20-22
1,750	1,200		7,100		10,000 yards = 5.5 miles
	laura bday				
400	1,750		6,460		11,000 yards = 6.25 miles
mphremagog swim	Lake Memphremagog swim				
2,000	0		8,000		9000 yards = 5 miles
	rest				
1,750	10 miles	1,350	9.00	11,000	12,000 = 6.8 miles
	rest, MW master class				
7,200	4.50		8,000		13,000 = 7.4miles
6-dip day	rest, winter shelter cook				
2,000					
POLAR BE					

The secret sauce for completing the Polar Bear: a spreadsheet

IMAGES COURTESY OF PIA HINCKLE

degree lake. I had experienced the effect that kind of cold has on the hands when I swam at Brighton Beach, New York, in the winter of 2022: *it burned*.

I find the cold of ice swimming to be the opposite of the cold of our winter bay swimming. In Aquatic Park, I feel the cold build from the inside out. If I am hydrated and well-fueled, I can keep swimming long after my hands become stiff claws.

But for me, the cold of ice swimming moves from the outside in. The skin burns. The brain and nervous system go into slo-mo mode, and you must impel your limbs to keep swimming. I haven't ice swum for enough minutes to have the fire-cold seep deep into my core. Maybe you die before that?

Water at 30.5 degrees bites you on contact like a wild animal searching for a warm place to hide. That's what it was this February when we won the 25-meter breaststroke Hat Competition swim. (Yes, there's a hat competition. We went with a beehive theme because, well, we Bee 60.)

One hundred-twenty yellow plastic bees swayed in the biting Vermont wind at the end of green gardening wires that were sticking out of our towering kebab-like foam beehives that were duct-taped to our swim caps. I took off my deck coat and stood next to the 25-meter pool cut into the ice of Lake Memphremagog in my bee bathing suit and yellow tutu and looked across at Elaine stepping down the wooden ladder into the water with her matching outfit. I mirrored her movements until we were both standing on the submerged platform. My legs immediately were numbed up to my thighs.

Beehives held high, we breaststroked in tandem through the viciously cold water. My hands were on fire as I watched ice floes forming on the surface of the water ahead of me. I exhaled purposefully to calm my heart rate and respiration. Swimming in icy water, even just the 30 seconds or so it will take me to get across, requires training and acclimation, but it is also a mental game: can I stand the burning? Can I keep breathing? Can I keep my body moving when my brain freezes to a halt?

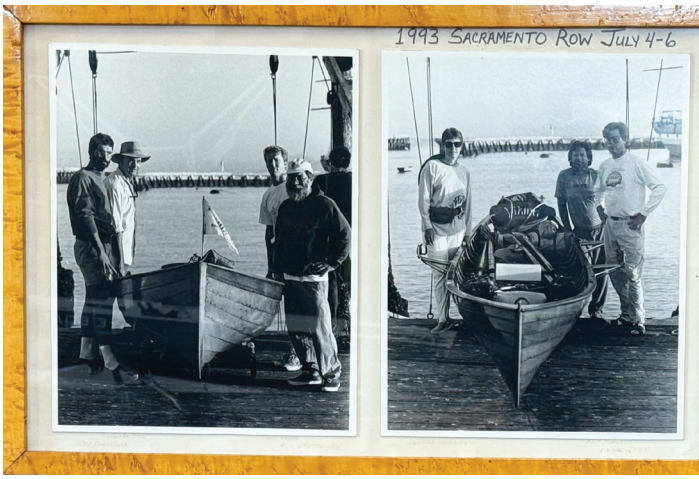
"It's like swimming in a freshly shaken martini!" I yelled to the onlookers as Elaine and I smiled in our matching red lipstick and red cat eye glasses with the 120 bees waving around our heads.

Cameras clicked. (A photo of us was featured in the Washington Post!) We made it to the other side. Escorts wrapped us up, put on our ice-cleated Crocs, and walked us to the warming room (no shower or sauna). Suzie had it organized, and I found a chair with a warm footbath waiting; a volunteer put a microwaved tube sock of rice around my neck. Some swimmers were shivering, but my only discomfort was the painful defrosting of my hands. That passed after about 10 minutes, and I felt fine. Maybe I could do more? Later that day, I changed my 25-meter free to a 50-free. Putting my face in the water was more challenging than the behatted breaststroke had been, and I struggled to get a proper rhythm to my stroke. After the turn, I found my brain slowing down, and I wondered if I was still swimming. Then I made it to the other side and was done. Time in the icy water: 1:03:86.

With my epic season of winter swimming behind me, I've had a chance to think about the reason I was so driven to make it happen. I never imagined I would become a later-in-life athlete, much less an ice swimmer. Fellow swimmers and non-swimming folk alike have often asked me why I do it. Why swim when it's so cold? Why not sleep in? Isn't all this swimming a little obsessive?

The short answer is: because I still can. This age has brought the distinct realization that I am in the Thursday of my life and I can see the weekend on the horizon. Sunday is the end. I've learned that with the time I have left in this body that is reasonably cooperative with unreasonable demands, I don't want to be comfortable. I want to be challenged physically and mentally, and I find satisfaction and joy in doing hard things like writing a memoir, doing six-dip days, and ice swimming. Time is awasting. Write now, swim now, or forever hold my peace.

***Pia Hinckle** is a recovering journalist, writer, editor, and open water swimmer. Her father is the late Gonzo writer and editor, Warren Hinckle.*



Rowers ready to launch their boats for the July 1993 Sacramento row.

HISTORY OF THE SACRAMENTO ROW

BY NANDA PALMIERI

In 1927 and 1928, Les Hendry rowed from the DC to Stockton. The latter was a race in doubles among the Dolphins, South End, Ariel, and the Alameda Boat Club.

After 17 years, 59-year-old Les Hendry decided to recapture his youth and set out in a single pleasure boat, the "Don Baggiani" for a 105-mile row to Sacramento last Aug 31.

Hendry said the row would take approximately one week. "It's one way to beat traffic," he commented.

In the early morning of November 7, 2024 three Dolphin Club members set out on an adventure in an eighty-six-year-old wooden rowboat. We launched our boat, the LAWTON C. HUGHES (1938), laden with sleeping bags, some spare clothes, food, and water from the dock of the nearly 150-year-old Dolphin Club. We were bound for Sacramento. The ever-changing conditions of the Bay make every row a new experience, and yet we also follow in the wake of those who rowed before us on these waters, some in this very same boat.

The first documented Sacramento row done by a member of the Dolphin Club was in 1955. The following is from an article in the September 1955 Dolphin Log entitled 'Les Hendry Beats Traffic Problem':

Prior to his row, Hendry sent a letter to the Sacramento City Council. The Aug 24, 1955 edition of the Sacramento Bee reports that in his letter, Hendry stated that he had rowed to Stockton in 1925 and 1927 and the resultant publicity helped that city get a deep-water channel. "Possibly if I row to Sacramento a couple of times you will reap similar results."

Hendry's row, timed so that he would arrive in Sacramento for the State Fair, got quite a bit of attention, and made it into the local newspapers, the Sacramento Union and Sacramento Bee. An article in the September 5, 1955 edition of the Sacramento Union reports:

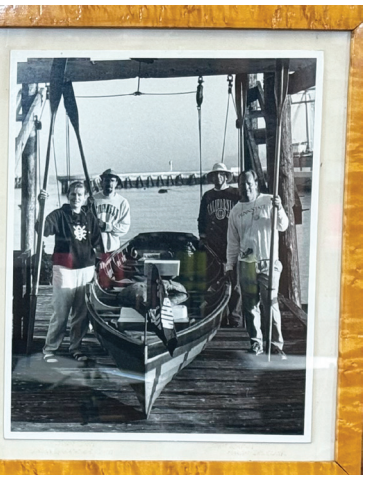
Hendry, none the worse for wear, denied rumors that he would row home again after seeing the State Fair. "Absolutely not," he said. "I'm shipping the boat back."

The September 5, 1955 edition of the Sacramento Bee reported that Hendry arrived during the Sacramento Yacht Club trophy presentations for annual races. In an impromptu ceremony, the Yacht Club proclaimed Hendry an honorary member of the Northern California Power Cruiser Association and then gave him their Grand Sweepstakes trophy.

The next year, in 1956, Les Hendry, Ed DeCossio Sr., and Joe Daniele undertook a row to Sacramento, this time in a double, the HUGHES. They scheduled to arrive once again in time for the State Fair. The September 3, 1956 edition of the Sacramento Bee reports on the success of their row, with their only disappointment being that the clothes they planned to wear to the State Fair were stolen when they stopped near Walnut Grove. They decided their working outfits were not proper and canceled their planned trip to the big show.

Les Hendry completed nine Sacramento rows between 1955 and 1968. His disciple, Ed DeCossio Sr., would go on to row to Sacramento every year, from his first row in 1956 through his final one in 1975, completing twenty in total. Both men did solo rows in singles as well as ones with more crew members in doubles. They also recruited more rowers from the Dolphin Club to participate in these adventures, which were timed so that their arrival coincided with the State Fair on Labor

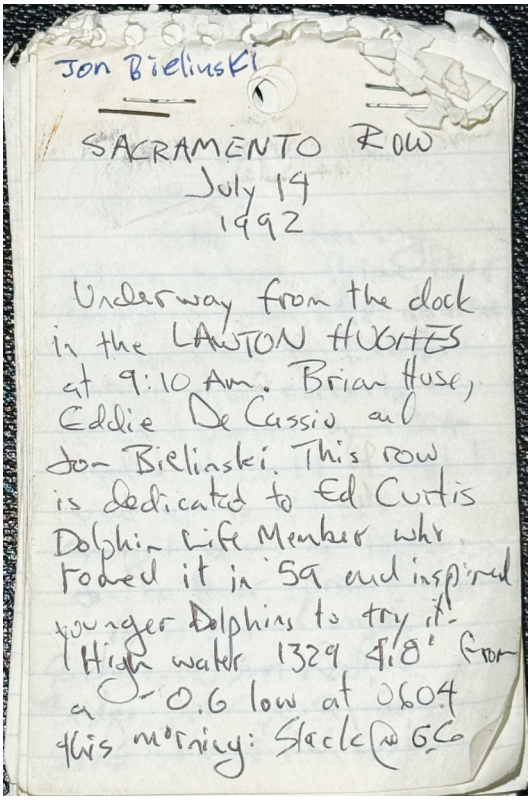
Editor's Note
Nanda Palmieri has compiled a complete list of rows conducted from the Dolphin Club to Sacramento. This list is available online at https://tinyurl.com/SacramentoRows.



These energetic bay area residents rowed their way up the Sacramento River from San Francisco to attend the California State Fair. Ed De Cossio, left, is from El Cerrito, Contra Costa County, and Leslie Hendry resides in Los Altos, Santa Clara County. Bee Photo

Freeways To The State Fair? Phooey, Declare Two Rowers

Sacramento Bee newspaper September 5, 1967



Jon Bielinski

SACRAMENTO ROW
July 19
1992

Underway from the dock in the LAWTON HUGHES at 9:10 Am. Brian Huse, Eddie DeCassio and Jon Bielinski. This row is dedicated to Ed Curtis Dolphin Life Member who rowed it in '59 and inspired younger Dolphins to try it. High water 1329 4.8' From a -0.6 low at 0604 this morning: Slack @ GG

The first page of Jon Bielinski's log book from the 1992 Sacramento row.

Day weekend. Ed Sr. also brought along many members of his family: his son Ed Jr. (starting when he was seventeen), another son, George (starting at twelve) and even his grandson Joe, once when he was ten. While Joe and George, at least in the early years, were likely mostly passengers, Ed Jr. participated as a rower from the start, completing five rows during this first era of the Dolphin Club Sacramento row.

Jon Bielinski recalls that in the early 90's there were rumblings at the Dolphin Club about restarting the Sacramento row. This was a time of renewed interest in and excitement about the Club's wooden fleet. Jon had arrived at the club eight years before, having recently completed the four-year project of building his 35-foot wooden Block Island Schooner, ANNABELLE, in 1983. With ANNABELLE in Aquatic Park Cove as proof of his boatbuilding skills, Jon began working on restoring the Club's wooden rowboats, starting with the rebuild of the LANDUCCI (1948).

Jon continued working on rebuilding the remaining wooden singles and doubles, all in dire need of care from years of deferred maintenance. A boat shop was created in the space that formerly held the club's second handball court (with a sloping floor that players hated). Jon also instituted weekly Boat Night, where, under his guidance, volunteers came together to work on the wooden boats. At one Boat Night in the spring of 1992, Ed Curtis showed up with a small notebook containing the log of the 1959 row to Sacramento that he, along with Les Hendry and Ed DeCossio Sr., did in the FARRELL. That was the final piece that made the rumblings turn into reality.

A boat shop was created in the space that formerly held the club's second handball court.

The HUGHES, newly restored at the end of 1991 (which included a new keel, bottom planking, frames, and many new interior fittings such as thwarts, oarlocks, and knees), was chosen for the first Sacramento row in seventeen years. She was also the boat used in the first Sacramento row undertaken in a double, the second overall, in 1956. The crew for the July 1992 row was Jon Bielinski, Brian Huse, and Eddie DeCossio Jr., who provided yet another link from the previous era of rows to this newly restarted tradition.

The row was a success, and ignited the imaginations of Dolphin rowers. Boat Night continued to be central to the organizing of subsequent Sacramento rows. By the next year, there was so much interest that the row was expanded to three doubles, the HUGHES, FARRELL, and VIKING with a total of eleven rowers. That July 4th Sacramento row in 1993 was also distinguished by the inclusion of the first two Dolphin women to complete one, Deborah Henning and Debbie Conti.

In June 1995, the largest Sacramento row ever took place, with five boats, the CRONIN, HUGHES, FARRELL, VIKING, and SPECTRE and an initial crew of eighteen rowers. Jon Bielinski relates how he and Padraic Doyle in the SPECTRE employed a tiny two horsepower engine as their 'third.' They would fire it up occasionally, allowing the two rowers in the fixed-thwart boat to catch up with the other doubles, which had the advantage of sliding seats and larger crews. The motor, however, eventually died. Just past Courtland, some rowers dropped out, exhausted by the heat. The SPECTRE was tied up, left to be picked up later, and crews were reassigned to the other boats to complete the row. The logistics of dealing with so many people and boats complicated this row, and from then on rows were kept to three boats or fewer.

In July of 1997, the WIELAND (1887) was relaunched after a major restoration in the boat shop that spanned five and half years. Shortly after that, plans were underway to take her on a row to Sacramento. The September 1997 'Sac and Back' row involved an ambitious plan to make a three-day over-and-back row to Sacramento. Three sets of rowers were organized with plans for

IMAGES COURTESY OF NANDA PALMIERI

Crew of largest attempted Sacramento Row—prepared to embark

Leaving Locke in the hours before dawn on March 6, 2022. Temperature near freezing.

crew switches at stops along the route. Complications arose, however. Progress was much slower than anticipated. The hoped-for speed of the WIELAND did not materialize, with crews that incorporated some less-experienced rowers, as well as the difficulty of adjusting to rowing sweep oar. After arriving at the Sacramento River turnoff to Steamboat Slough, it became clear that the three-day row would not work as scheduled. There was also no possibility of extending the row with so many people's schedules to take into account. So, at that point, the WIELAND turned around. On the way back, the wind came up and was blowing hard from the west.

Darkness fell, and while the crew could see the light at the end of Collinsville dock, they could not make progress against the wind and flood to reach their planned stop. Deb Henning, the Club's Boat Captain and a crew member, made the call to turn around again and head back to Brannan Island, downwind and in the direction of the current. After docking there, Jon and Eric Hansen left to get ANNABELLE, then returned to tow the WIELAND back to Aquatic Park, the wind howling all the way. Reuben Hechanova and a crew took control of the WIELAND at the fishing docks and brought her back to the Club. The WIELAND row was a reminder that the weather and tides are central to the success of a row.

Throughout the years, most of the Sacramento rows were undertaken in the wooden Dolphin doubles, the CHAS. M FARRELL (1917), LAWTON C. HUGHES (1938) and JAMES J. CRONIN (1938). These boats are in many ways ideal for this voyage. They are extremely stable and seaworthy and have plenty of space beneath their thwarts and in the bow beneath the foredeck for all the equipment and supplies needed for a multi-day voyage. They row easily with three or even four people aboard, allowing for rowers to rotate through the rowing stations, bow and stroke, and take turns at the helm, operating the rudder. Rotating through stations and getting regular rest breaks allows for more non-stop rowing. If a fourth person joins the crew, there are four positions to rotate through: bow, stroke, helm and true rest, perched on the foredeck in the bow, simply relaxing and taking in the view.

The VIKING (1916), a longer, skinnier wooden lapstrake double with small outriggers, was part of the fleet for the 1993 and 1995 Sacramento rows. This boat is lighter and faster than the Dolphin doubles, but tradeoffs include less room for gear, less stability and ability to handle rough conditions, and a lower freeboard, making for a wetter voyage in choppy conditions.

Records of the early era of Sacramento rows indicate that rowers in doubles experimented with the time between rotations. The earliest ones had rowers switching every two hours. Later on, one-hour rotations were noted. In more recent years, and continuing today, we have landed on 20-minute rotations as ideal. With a three-person crew in a double, this means for every hour on the water, each crew member rows for 40 minutes and steers for 20 minutes, moving from helm to stroke to bow and then repeating.

Single boats were also used by a few extra-intrepid rowers. The very first Sacramento row was done by Les Hendry in the DON BAGGIANI (1948), a Dolphin single. Ed DeCossio Sr. did a number of rows in singles, also in the BAGGIANI, as well as in her two sister ships, also from 1948, the SID. FOSTER and DINO LANDUCCI. It was also noted in several years' rows that, even in doubles, Ed Sr. 'rowed all the way' while his fellow crew mates took turns at the helm.

In 1998, two Dolphin rowers embarked upon the first row to Sacramento in singles since Ed DeCossio Sr. in the 70s. Reuben Hechanova in the GOOD LUCK (1976) and Deb Henning in the CECCO (1988) set out for Sacramento that July. Both made it to Benicia that first day, but Deb Henning had to drop out the next morning, needing to go to the ER because of a severe wrist injury. While Deb had participated in previous Sacramento rows, this was Reuben's first time making the journey. He made it to Sacramento through very difficult conditions. He contended with large breaking waves that threatened to swamp his boat, as well as major water releases from three dams that made fighting the river current an ordeal.

Rotating through stations and getting regular rest breaks allows for more non-stop rowing.

In August of 2006, Renee DeCossio rowed the GLADYS AUSTIN (1987) to Sacramento, becoming the first Dolphin woman to accomplish that feat, while also paying tribute to her grandfather, Ed DeCossio Sr., as well as the others in her family who made the journey. She was accompanied by Jon Bielinski, John Kortum, and Grant Mays in the HUGHES. The HUGHES rowed behind her, allowing Renee in the AUSTIN to watch where the double to her stern went and follow its lead in steering, alleviating the need to turn as frequently. Other solo rows include those by Jon Bielinski in the JOE BRUNO (1988) in 2007 and Jay Dean in the KOHLENBERG (2010) in 2015, the latter accompanied by crews in the HUGHES and CRONIN.

While Les Hendry and Ed DeCossio Sr. were the stalwart organizers and participants in the Sacramento rows of the 1950s through the 70s, Jon Bielinski took on that role in the revived tradition that started in the 1990s. He has outpaced even Ed DeCossio Sr. in the most Sacramento rows completed, surpassing Ed Sr.'s twenty rows by completing his twenty-first row in 2015. To date, Jon has done twenty-seven Sacramento rows.

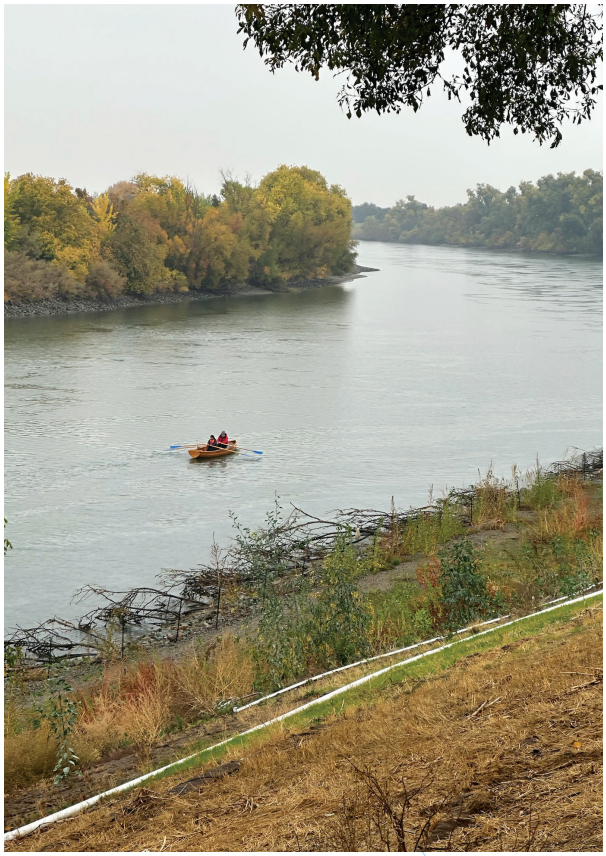
During the early era of Sacramento rows it became tradition to schedule rows around the Labor Day weekend, so as to arrive in Sacramento for the State Fair. When the tradition was revived in the 1990s, rows were generally scheduled in the summer. Many accounts contain references to the blazing heat experienced by rowers in the Delta. As time went by, some Sacramento rows took place later in the year, into October and even November. The fall often offers more comfortable temperatures as well as lighter winds.

In March 2022, the first Sacramento row after a two-year pandemic hiatus took place. The unusual time of year offered a very different Delta to the rowers, one that was cool and green, unlike the hot dry place of summer and early fall. Early morning temperatures hovered near freezing, but warmed up to comfortable levels during the day. Planning a row in the spring needed to take into account the possibility of rains and snowmelt causing strong river currents.

Dam releases, which can also happen later in the year, can also cause currents that are difficult to impossible to row against.

Finding a set of days with favorable tides has proven to be one of the most crucial steps in planning a Sacramento row. The right tides can make all the difference between a strenuous but enjoyable jaunt up the Bay and into the River, and a seemingly Sisyphean ordeal. Ensuring that most of the rowing takes place during floods and that the ebbs are not too large is the winning strategy.

Another challenge of planning a Sacramento row is deciding where to stop and tie up, both for quick breaks during the day and for overnight stays. Rowers have used a combination of public docks, marinas, campgrounds, and friends' private docks for this. Many of the same places show up again and again in records, for instance: Benicia, Rio Vista, Courtland, Brannan Island and Freeport. Rio Vista was a frequent first night's stop in the early 90s. This made for a very long first day's row, and then involved tying up at the public dock and sleeping on the public lawn, a somewhat sketchy endeavor that one year resulted in citations given to all the rowers camped out there.



November 11, 2024. The last stretch of the Sacramento River before Miller Park, Nanda Palmieri and Jon Bielinski rowing the HUGHES. Photo by John Thorpe

The 2022 Sacramento crew retrieves the Romani house sign for restoration. Front center: Jude Stalker; behind her, L to R: Jim McDonald, Eric Hansen, Julia Hechanova, John Thorpe, Nanda Palmieri, Jon Bielinski.

Jon Bielinski relays speaking with Lou Marcelli, the Club's longtime caretaker, about the problems with Rio Vista as a stop for Sacramento rows. Lou told Jon that he had a house in Collinsville with a dock and that the rowers could stay there. The very next year Lou's family home, the Romani house, in Collinsville became a regular stopover for the Sacramento rowers. Lou would meet the rowers when they arrived. He and Cynthia Coppi, his girlfriend of many years, were gracious hosts, cooking wonderful meals for the appreciа-

Ensuring that most of the rowing takes place during floods and that the ebbs are not too large is the winning strategy.

He Said He Could and He Did Row Boat From SF to State Fair

LESLIE C. Hendry, 59, who insisted he could do it and then did, yesterday completed a rowing trip from Aquatic Park in San Francisco to Sacramento, a distance he estimated to be 165 miles.

The seventy trip ended at 7:05 P. M., when he brought his 14-foot boat into Sacramento Yacht Club, at the foot of Broadway.

Hendry, none the worse for wear, denied rumors he would row home again, after seeing the State Fair.

"Absolutely not," he said, "I'm shipping the boat back."

Hendry indicated the trip "got more disorganized the farther I went.

"I started forgetting things," he commented. "I even left my glasses in Clarksburg last night.

"I pulled in pretty late at night." The only thing open was a telephone booth, but a woman by the name of Mrs. Albert Silva put me up for the night. I left my glasses in her house.

"My trouble started in Rio Vista. After a reception there I rowed across the river to Bobbie's Resort and tipped the boat over to get rid of some water. My suitcase was dumped into the river and I didn't miss it until I was past Isleton. Some fellow in a power boat brought it to me.

The suitcase, he said, is a special watertight box-like affair San Francisco writers had termed "a glorified garbage can."

He stopped at Wheeler's Landing, near Sacramento, yesterday where he had a catfish dinner "on the house" in preference to an offer of a steak.

"I had emergency supplies but I didn't need them. I'd just tied up at some spot along the river for my meals, I never was much of a cook, anyhow."

Hendry's overnight stops, usually in a sleeping bag on a wharf, included Martinez, Antioch, Rio Vista, Koket Resort at Walnut Grove, Steamboat Landing, and Clarksburg.

A member of the Dolphin Swim and Boat Club in San Francisco, he hopes to interest members in rowing their way upriver to the Fair each year.

THE WEATHER—
Fair today, tomorrow. High yesterday 105. Complete report page 2.

The Sacramento Union

5 Cents
BIGGEST NICKEL WEST OF THE ROCKIES

Vol. 156 No. 75,664 105th YEAR—PHONE GIlbert 2-7811 * SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA, MONDAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 5, 1955 DAILY 5 CENTS, SUNDAY 10 CENTS

Les Hendry's Sacramento row gets a headline in the Sacramento Union newspaper, September 5, 1955

tive rowers. The annual arrival of the Dolphin Club boats and rowers caused quite a stir in the small community. Jon believes it also offered a small benefit to Lou, who appreciated the boost it gave him in the eyes of the townspeople of Collinsville.

As a token of the rowers' appreciation, a nameboard for the house was carved in the boat shop. Lou gold leafed it himself. This nameboard was brought back to the Club for restoration by the crew of the 2022 Sacramento row. It was restored and returned the next year by the 2023 crew.

Sacramento rows are generally one-way, due in large part to the difficulty of rowing against the prevailing westerly winds. This means that boats need to be transported back to the club somehow. In the past boats were transported on top of the lumber racks of borrowed pickup trucks or pulled on borrowed boat trailers. Singles were occasionally brought back in U-Hauls. Later, the club acquired two trailers, which we still have, and which are now used to bring boats back.

Jon compared the first row he did in 1992 to the most recent, in November 2024. He described the first one as 'exploratory.' The crew had only AAA maps for navigation and relatively little planning or attention to tides was done ahead of time. The rowing crew depended heavily on Eddie DeCossio Jr.'s recollections of the rows he had done many years ago in his youth. Jon recalls searching for a remembered breakfast spot in the Delta during the last day of that row, rowing from side to side of the River looking for this long-gone oasis. The quest to find a stop for food and drink was ultimately unsuccessful. Near the end of the row, the exhausted, hungry, and dehydrated rowers were met by Reuben Hechanova at the Sacramento Yacht Club and transported to the paradise of a booth with thick cushioned seats in an air-conditioned lounge for food and drink.

Jon Bielinski on his 25th Sacramento row in 2022, at the Freeport Bar and Grill, also celebrating 25 years.

Each subsequent year provided information and lessons on how to better plan and organize proceeding rows. Jon described the 2024 row with Nanda Palmieri and John Thorpe as, in some ways, "the antithesis" of that first one. The tides were figured out in detail, all the stops were planned, food and water were brought along or arrangements made at stops, the crew was experienced and they rowed well together, and even had pretty good luck with the weather.

The Sacramento row has captured the imaginations of generations of Dolphin Club members. It is an adventure, a rite-of-passage, and a pilgrimage of sorts. Entering the River and sloughs, levees obscure the fields and roads and towns beyond. Everything outside of the water, the small boat, and one's companions fade away. Time slows to the rhythm of the oars pulling through the water. We make this journey again and again.

The last word is courtesy of Phil Kohlenberg who captured the essence of a Sacramento row perfectly in this quote.

Remember the end of The Great Gatsby? "So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past." The row up the River is like this, a trip into the past as well as into the heat and mists of the interior, and all around are spirits of Dolphins who made this trip in years past and left the marks of their oars on the waters of the river.

***Nanda Palmieri** has served the Dolphin Club as board member, treasurer, wooden boat commissioner, and boat shop volunteer. She has rowed to Sacramento from the Club multiple times.*

Scott Anderson

Affectionately known as "Scotty," Scott Anderson was born on March 21, 1945, in Columbus, Ohio, and lived an extraordinary life.

A gifted athlete and sports fan, Scott was a star baseball pitcher in his youth, famously throwing four consecutive no-hitters. He was recruited to pitch for Ohio State University, and was a member of their NCAA championship teams in 1965–66. He coached little league baseball, including the notoriously undefeated team called the "Bears." Scott was often called, "Mr. Enthusiasm."

While at Ohio State, Scott earned his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree, joined the U.S. Army, and married the love of his life, Diana Schwenker. After graduation, Scott was stationed at Walter Reed Hospital, where he was involved in groundbreaking malaria research to protect our troops in Vietnam and influenced modern medicine. During the Nixon Administration, Scott served as the White House veterinarian while at Walter Reed. His deep empathy for animals became apparent early on—even "homeschooling" a baby chimpanzee affectionately named "The Kid."

For more than 20 years, Scott served on UCSF Medicine's IACUC board, overseeing the ethical use of animals in medical research, and never hesitated to shut down any research that compromised animals' quality of life. He was also frequently called upon by the San Francisco Zoo to help with the "big cats." His dedication left an enduring impact on veterinary medicine, animal welfare, and the city he loved.

Scott's passions extended far beyond his work. An athlete his entire life, he remained active until the very end. He was an avid golfer, runner, tennis player, ocean swimmer, and Life Member of the Dolphin Club, swimming over 100 miles annually in San Francisco Bay. For Scott, these pursuits were less about competition and more about camaraderie, adventure, and laughter.

Nikolas Tomasevic

Nikolas Tomasevic likely suffered a seizure and drowned on the morning of August 23, according to his autopsy report. Police divers recovered his body three days after he disappeared while swimming in Aquatic Park Cove. He was 35.

Nikolas was an avid swimmer who circled the cove anywhere from three to five days a week. The route was about a mile and could take about an hour. But he also lived with epilepsy, records show, and his family confirmed. He was the first member of the Dolphin Club to die while swimming in the Cove, and the first to die in the water since Jim Small was killed in an open-water race across San Francisco Bay in 1963.

On the day he went missing, Nikolas and a swimming partner, who was not a member of the Dolphin Club, went for a swim but parted ways in the water. Hours later, after not hearing from him, the swimming partner reported him missing to the Club.

Rescue divers found his body near the Jacuzzi, not far from where he was originally reported missing.

Aleksandra Ivanova, a San Francisco resident who married Nikolas in 2023, described her husband as a "pillar" of the city's Serbian-American community who was training to swim from Alcatraz Island to San Francisco.

Nikolas spent his childhood in Belgrade but completed his last year of school in Kentucky, where he moved to play basketball. He was a longtime server at Coqueta, a Spanish tapas restaurant on the Embarcadero.

In the words of Brendan Sheehan, "Nikolas was a true friend — full of warmth, humor, and kindness. His love for the water and for this community touched us all. Losing him this way is unimaginably hard, and our hearts are heavy with grief."

Winter 2025
Dolphin Club Swim Results

2025 Bay Bridge
July 13, 2025

A very successful Bay Bridge swim, conditions were nice, the swimmers all got into the cove in record time! Lots of traffic around creakers but with direction from the lead pilot, we handled it all safely. Great work all around by pilots and all volunteers, it was a good swim!

Lead Pilot: Ramsey Williams / Nathaniel Berger

Lead Swim Commissioner: Lindsay Stripling

Test Swim: Nathaniel Berger, Lindsay Stripling, Ramsey Williams, Alex Kroeger, Nihan Tiryaki, Damian Guenzing, Ben Chun, Gina Rus, Kati Hopman

Pilots: Tim McElligott, Ellen Offermann, Ramsey Williams, Ben Chun, Dave Buchanan, Marci Glazer, Nathaniel Berger, Lindsay Stripling, Gina Rus, Jeffery Tong, Nanda Palmieri, Dominic Lusinchi, Daniel Marshal, Mickey Lavelle, John Thorpe, Ginger Watson, Blair Adamson, Rachele Mechem, Jon Bellinski, Pete Strietmann, Tom McCall, John Ribiola, Barry Christian, Lisa Weaver, Megan Wachs, Farrah Spott, Otto Williams, Tamara Straus, Sandy Chapman, Kati Hopman, Brian Kiernan, Amanda Ernzer, Erin Gasser, Virginie Eskenazi, Daniel Cavey, Liam Ronan

Volunteers: Andy Stone, Kristoffer Milonas, Kalani Leifer, Miranda Rouse, Mike Thoresen, Sue Robbins, JB Melcher, Tamar Besson, Jim Frew, Aniko Kurczinak, Eva Adamson, Aaron Rosenthal, Dawn Holley, Joby Bernstein, Carolyn Hui, Marie Sayles, Betsy Mayer, Pete Neubauer, Alice Jones, Ken Schwartz, Andy Stone, Tom Reynolds, Tracy Joyner, Eric Schupert, Lauren Brinkmeyer, Elaine Van Vleck, Henry Saunders, Eliana Agudelo, Robert Blum, Sam Spelsberg, Amy Brant, Miguel Gonzalez

Place	Swimmers Name	Swim Time	LCP
1	Allison Arnold	0:38:52	10
2	Felicia Lee	0:39:00	9
3	Joby Bernstein	0:39:11	8
4	Lissi Knell	0:40:56	7
5	Stephanie McGee	0:41:02	6
6	Henry Saunders	0:41:09	5
7	Mackenzie Kirk	0:41:41	4
8	Camden Benson	0:42:28	3
9	Dominick Kirk	0:42:37	2
10	Kalani Leifer	0:42:58	1
11	Patrick Kirk	0:43:18	
12	Lauren Brinkmeyer	0:43:32	
13	Emily Schmitz	0:44:38	
14	David Holscher	0:44:55	
15	Bill Gardner	0:45:04	
16	Steve Schatz	0:45:17	
17	Miranda Rouse	0:45:36	
18	Alex Kroeger	0:45:38	
19	Juliet Cox	0:46:05	
20/21	Ken Schwarz	0:46:24	
22	Andrew Cunningham	0:46:38	
23	Ben Clark	0:46:41	
24	Kim Gorcyca	0:46:58	
25	Michael Tschantz-Hahn	0:47:18	
26	Alisha Kewalramani	0:47:31	
27	Jeff Citron	0:48:04	
28	Tovia Sobel	0:48:16	
29	Joey Murphy	0:48:32	
30	Sean Lavelle	0:48:37	
31	Heather Warm	0:49:03	
32	Heather Kremer	0:49:15	
33	Daniel Rosario	0:49:28	
34	Elizabeth Mayer	0:49:42	
35	Tom Reynolds	0:51:11	
36	Gary Arabatyan	0:51:18	
37	Rohin Daswani	0:51:26	
38	Eduardo Nunez	0:51:37	
39	David O'Reilly	0:51:30	
40	Peter Bartu	0:51:47	
41	Madeleine Crow	0:51:47	
42	Maggie Lonergan	0:52:21	
43	Mitch Witek	0:52:34	
44	Eric Wind	0:52:38	
45	Kristoffer Milonas	0:52:41	
46	Kathleen Sheridan	0:53:01	
47	Sara Chang	0:53:16	
48	Danny Wohlner	0:53:18	
49	Margaret Keenan	0:53:23	
50	Henry Dombey	0:53:23	
51	Beth Stein	0:53:28	
52	Clara Ault	0:53:52	
53	Tracy Joyner	0:54:31	
54	Briana McCarthy	0:56:50	
55	denise sauerteig	0:56	
56	Lindzy Bivings	0:57	
57	Brooke Wentz	0:57	
58	Ally Sillins	0:57	
59	Damian Guenzing	0:57	
60	Elizabeth Sharpe	0:58	
61	Jamie Robinson	0:58	
62	Keith Nelson	0:58:30	
63	Chris Igo	0:58:45	
64	Lisa Domitrovich	0:59:05	
65	Pete Neubauer	0:59:44	
66	Pia Hinckle	0:59:46	
67	Wafaa Sabil	1:00:50	
68	Alex Buehlmann	1:00:51	
69	Peter Cullinan	1:00:55	
70	John Hornor	1:01:02	
71	Crissa Williams	1:01:30	
72	Kathleen Duffy	1:02:44	
73	Eliana Agudelo	1:02:44	
74	Carolyn Hui	1:05:14	

PHOTO: HELEN BOURDEAUX

2025 Alcatraz
September 28, 2025

This year's Alcatraz swim was an eventful one. Although we had calm conditions, swimmers contended with a stronger than expected ebb. Over 20 swimmers were pushed past the opening and required a reposition!

It was a fun day despite the challenges, and all 54 swimmers made it safely to the Club. All participants received a towel featuring artwork by Zack McCune, which will be an excellent memento for the swim in the years to come.

Lead Pilot: Nathaniel Berger / Lead Swim Commissioner: Alex Kroeger

Test Swim: Nathaniel Berger, Sharon Wong, Ally Sillins, Madeleine Crow, Alex Kroeger, Damian Guenzing

Volunteers: Alix Marduel, Derrick Rebello, Kelsey Dean, Wafaa Sabil, DJ Niccolls, Sandra Halladey, Sam Ferguson, Thorsten Anderson, Mark Lenz, Tamar Besson, Kristen Steck, Diane Campbell, Linda Michel-Cassidy, Rebecca Tilley, Laure Darcy, Nanda Palmieri, Mary Alex, Heidi Williams, Fiona Donald, Eric Shupert, Beth Stein, Tom Neill, Andrew Cassidy, Janine Corcoran, Juliet Cox, Jamie Robinson, Elaine Van Vleck, Logan Craig, Marie Sayles, Lorna Newlin, Alice Jones, Laura Crooner, Steven Hattwick, Julia Brash

Pilots: Tom McCall, Lisa Weaver, Virginie Eskenazi, Dominic Lusinchi, Lilian Tsai, Marlin Gilbert, Nanda Palmieri, John Thorpe, Terry Horn, George Chamales, John Grunstad, Robin Hart, Stu Gannes, Suzanne Heim, Aubrey Clark, Aaron Smith, Andrew Dunbar, David Buchanan, Otto Williams, Jeffrey Tong, Paul Irving, Brian Kiernan, Rohin Daswani, Jon Bielinski, Liam Ronan, Mickey Lavelle, Even Hirsch, Diane Walton, Matt Stromberg, Tim Dumm, Damian Guenzing, Tim McElligott, Will Kushner, Nathaniel Berger, Alex Kroeger

The swimmers and pilots leaving Alcatraz on New Years Day enjoyed one of the most spectacular sunrises that San Francisco can offer.

Place	Swimmers Name	Swim Time	LCP
1	Jessica Huang	0:30	10
2	Mackenzie Kirk	0:31	9
3	Lauren Brinkmeyer	0:33	8
4	David Rich	0:35	7
5	Emily Schmitz	0:36	6
6	Chris Kelly	0:36	5
7	Ken Schwarz	0:36	4
8	Emily Ozer	0:38	3
9	Michael Tschantz-Hahn	0:38	2
10	Ben Clark	0:39	1
11	Jeff Citron	0:39	
12	Heather Warm	0:45	
13	Tovia Sobel	0:45	
14	Keith Gray	0:46	
15	Elizabeth Mayer	0:47	
16	Edwin Purselle	0:52	
17	Beth Stein	0:52	
18	Gina Rus	0:52	
19	Ernst Halperin	0:54	
20	Maggie Lonergan	0:56	
21	Clara Ault	0:56	
22	Tom Neill	0:57	
23	Sandy Chapman	0:58	
24	Marie Sayles	0:59	
25	Ken Coren	1:00	
26	Lindzy Bivings	1:00	
27	Pete Neubauer	1:01	
28	Tom Reynolds	1:01	
29	Phil Gaal	1:03	
30	Sarah Roberts	1:03	
31	Miguel Gonzalez	1:03	
32	Vicki Stolberg	1:04	
33	Farrah Spott	1:05	
34	Elizabeth Ozer	1:05	
35	Ashley Hazel	1:06	
36	Will Powning	1:06	
37	Bobby Carp	1:06	
38	Crissa Williams	1:06	
39	Kathleen Duffy	1:07	
40	Aaron Rosenthal	1:09	
41	Joe Ferrero	1:09	
42	Kathy Wallace	1:09	
43	Holly Reed	1:11	
44	Andy Stone	1:11	
45	Chris Igo	1:12	
46	Keith Nelson	1:12	
47	Eric Reed	1:13	
48	Pia Hinckle	1:14	
49	Carolyn Hui	1:14	
50	Eliana Agudelo	1:14	
51	Lewis Haidt	1:15	
52	Robert Blum	1:15	
53	Dean Badessa	1:16	
54	Daniel Silva	1:16	

*Note that some swimmers were re-positioned, so their time does not reflect swimming the entire route.

2025 Joe Bruno Golden Gate
October 25, 2025

This year's Golden Gate swim took an alternate route starting from the South Tower and finishing at Anita Rock, to avoid multiple inbound and outbound commercial ships transiting the Golden Gate at the same time as our swim. As we arrived for the start, fog descended and we were glad to be on a route that was still safe in this reduced visibility.

We had 82 swimmers this year, which is the largest number since 2021 when the swim was split over two days. The alternate course was slightly longer than a typical gate for our fastest swimmers, and as time went on and the Adventure Cat drifted east, the course got even longer. "Good work" to the swimmers, and "Thank you" to the pilots for getting everyone to the finish! An extra thank you to our pilot friends from next door, David Brown and Andrew Bennett, who brought out an extra motorized boat from SERC since Moon is in the shop.

Lead Pilot: Nathaniel Berger / Lead Swim Commissioner: Ben Chun

Test Swim: Barbara Byrnes, Dominic Lusinchi, Radha Tomassetti, Nathaniel Berger, Margaret Keenan, Hal Offen, Margaret Keenan, Hal Offen, Andrew Bennett

Volunteers: Eric Shupert, Teddy Chivetta, Mackenzie Kirk, Jessica Huang, Eliana Agudelo, Janine Corcoran, Andrew Cunningham, John Henderson, Kate Lapres, Derrick Rebello, Tracy Joyner, Sue Garfield, George Robin, Nancy Friedman, Julia Murphy, Wheeler Reiss, Dave Ufferfilge, Emily Nogue, Tamar Besson, Diane Campbell, Heidi Howell, Marie Sayles, Rebecca Tilley, Gina Bianucci Rus, Stephen Hattwick, Ruby Lipscomb, Tom McCall, Harrison Dillon, Max Audette, Conor Mehan

Pilots: Nathaniel Berger, Maile Smith, Marci Glazer, Maeve Lavelle, Ben Chun, Chris Clay, Sharon Wong, David Brown, Andrew Bennett, Tom McCall, Mikhail Melnikov, Ginger Wilson, Dominic Lusinchi, Donald Osborne, Charmaine Leonard, Riley Culligan, Sam Rushworth, Barry Christian, Michelle Nguyen, David Buchanan, Grant Mays, John Robiola, Diane Jackson, Rachele Mechem, Jeffrey Tong, Gina Bianucci Rus, Sophie Hays, Steve Hanson, Brian Kiernan, Teresa Zhang, Danny Wohlner, Cathy Huang, Kimberly Swan, Otto Williams, Stephen Balhoff, Isabella Ahrens, Natazha Raine Bernie, Margaret Keenan, Kathleen Sheridan, Denise Sauerteig

Place	Swimmers Name	Swim Time	LCP
1	Allison Arnold	0:24:48	10
2	Jessica Huang	0:25:05	9
3	Lissi Knell	0:26:21	8
4	Mackenzie Kirk	0:27:30	7
5	Joby Bernstein	0:28:09	6
6	Lauren Brinkmeyer	0:29:48	5
7	Juliet Cox	0:29:56	4
7	Miranda Rouse	0:30:24	3
8	Ken Schwarz	0:31:15	2
9	Steve Schatz	0:31:20	1
10	Christophe Crombez	0:32:35	
11	Jeff Citron	0:33:24	
12	Chris Kelly	0:33:30	
13	Ben Clark	0:34:50	
14	Alex Kroeger	0:35:36	
15	Sean Lavelle	0:35:49	
16	Kim Gorcyca	0:36:02	
17	Heather Warm	0:36:03	
18	Tovia Sobel	0:36:53	
19	Heather Kremer	0:37:27	
20	Logan Craig	0:37:53	
21	Elizabeth Mayer	0:38:31	
22	Keith Gray	0:38:53	
23	Tom Bernard	0:40:31	
24	David O'Reilly	0:40:54	
25	Edwin Purselle	0:41:34	
26	Madeleine Crow	0:41:59	
27	Ben Hu	0:42:49	
28	Henry Rogers	0:42:49	
29	Maggie Lonergan	0:43:44	
30	Clara Ault	0:44:12	
31	Virginie Eskenazi	0:44:18	
32	Niki Ragone	0:44:40	
33	Teddy Chivetta	0:45:11	
34	Tracy Joyner	0:48:01	
35	Rebecca Tilley	0:48:11	
36	Lewis Haidt	0:48:21	
37	Miguel Gonzalez	0:48:49	
38	Tom Reynolds	0:49:01	
39	Erin Gasser	0:49:11	
40	Daniel Silva	0:49:32	
41	Pia Hinckle		
42	Holly Reed		
43	Lisa Domitrovich		
44	Robert Blum		
45	Connor Clark		
46	Laure Darcy		
47	Morgan Kulla		
48	Mike Thoresen		
49	Damian Guenzing		
50	Mickey Lavelle		
51	Dean Badessa		
52	Nancy Booth		
53	Nancy Hornor		
54	Chris Igo		
55	Julia Peterson		
56	Keith Nelson		
57	Ken Coren		
58	Peter Cullinan		
59	Eric Reed		
60	Kathleen Duffy		
61	Ally Sillins		
62	Scott Halsted		
63	Pete Neubauer		
64	Bobby Carp		
65	Jim Frew		
66	Kati Hopman		
67	Robin Hart		
68	John Hornor		
69	Wafaa Sabil		
70	Will Powning		
71	Robin Rome		
72	Aaron Rosenthal		
73	John Melcher		
74	Lorna Newlin		
75	Carolyn Hui		
76	Joni Beemsterboer		
77	Mary Cantini-Norkin		
78	Alix Marduel		
79	Sarah Roberts		
80	Phil Gaal		
81	Andy Stone		

Note the finish at the Adcat was drifting and repositioned twice. Times after the first repositioning are not reported, but all swimmers completed the swim.

The Dolphin Swimming
& Boating Club
502 Jefferson Street
San Francisco, CA 94109

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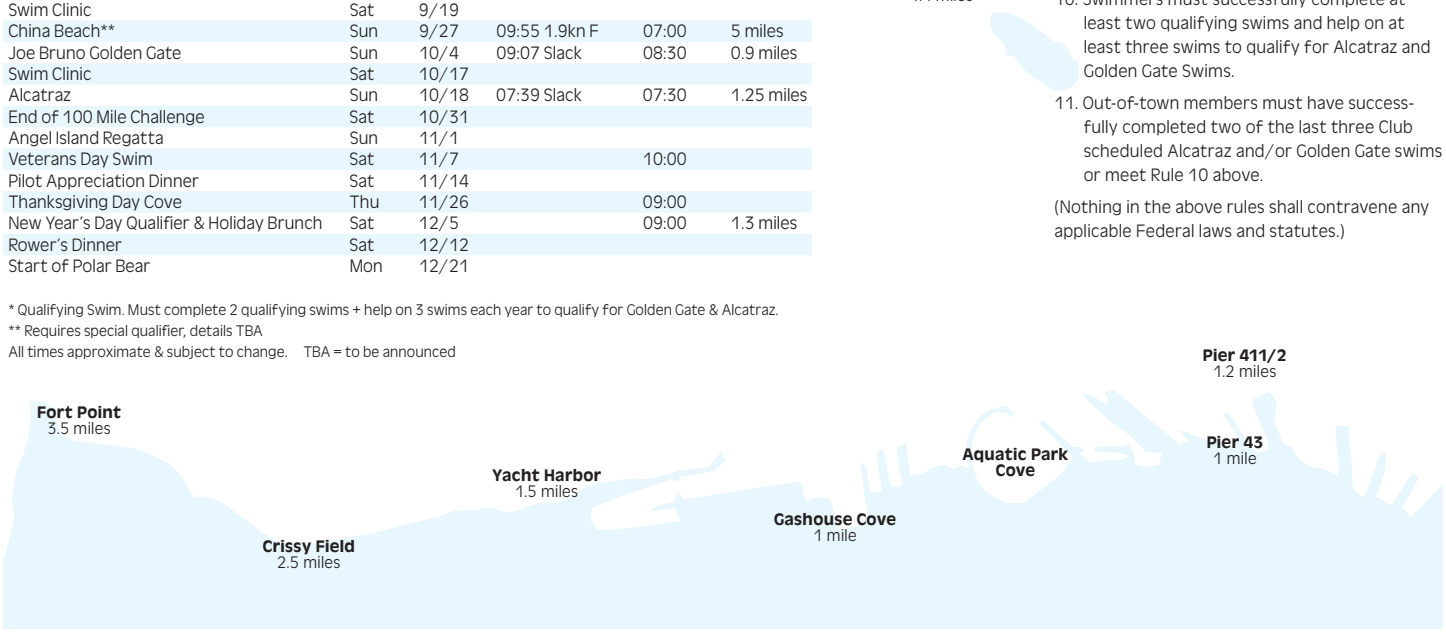
2026
Dolphin Club Swim & Event Schedule

Event	Day	Date	Current	Jump	Distance
New Year's Day Alcatraz*	Thu	1/1	09:16 Slack	09:00	1.25 miles
New Year's Day Cove	Thu	1/1		11:00	
Pier 41*	Sat	2/7	06:38 1.8kn E	07:30	0.8 miles
Valentine's Day Singles Regatta	Sat	2/14			
Old Timers' Lunch	Sun	2/15			
Coghlan Beach*	Sun	3/1	07:06 1.5kn F	07:30	1.2 miles
End of Polar Bear	Sat	3/21			
Start of Walt Stack Challenge	Sun	3/22			
Pier 39*	Sat	4/11	10:51 1.3kn E	09:30	1.4 miles
Walt Schneebeli Over-60 Cove	Sun	5/3		09:00	
Alcatraz Regatta	Sat	5/16			
Master Mariners Regatta	Sat	5/23			
Yacht Harbor*	Sat	5/30	10:40 1.7kn F	09:30	1.6 miles
Swim Clinic	Sun	5/31			
End of Walt Stack Challenge	Sun	5/31			
Start of 100 Mile Challenge	Mon	6/1			
Wooden Boat Swimmer Rescue Class	Sun	6/7			
Pride Swim*	Sat	6/13	09:36 1.6kn F	09:00	1.6 miles
John Nogue Swim For Science - Pier 15*	Sat	6/20	07:44 2.0kn E	08:00	2.1 miles
Swim Clinic	Sun	7/12			
Baykeeper Bay Bridge*	Sat	7/18	06:34 2.2kn E	07:30	3 miles
McCovey Cove Mixer Regatta	Sun	7/19			
Swim Clinic	Sat	8/1			
Doc Howard 45+ Swim*	Sun	8/2		10:00	
Santa Cruz 1 Mile*	Sat	8/15			
Santa Cruz 2 Mile*	Sun	8/16			
Wooden Boat Swimmer Rescue Class	Sun	8/23			
Ft. Point*	Sat	8/29	10:38 1.8kn F	08:30	3.5 miles
Swim Clinic	Sun	8/30			
Escape from Alcatraz Tri (EFAT)	Sat	9/12	07:51 Slack	07:30	1.25 miles
Swim Across America	Sat	9/12			
Swim Clinic	Sat	9/19			
China Beach**	Sun	9/27	09:55 1.9kn F	07:00	5 miles
Joe Bruno Golden Gate	Sun	10/4	09:07 Slack	08:30	0.9 miles
Swim Clinic	Sat	10/17			
Alcatraz	Sun	10/18	07:39 Slack	07:30	1.25 miles
End of 100 Mile Challenge	Sat	10/31			
Angel Island Regatta	Sun	11/1			
Veterans Day Swim	Sat	11/7		10:00	
Pilot Appreciation Dinner	Sat	11/14			
Thanksgiving Day Cove	Thu	11/26		09:00	
New Year's Day Qualifier & Holiday Brunch	Sat	12/5		09:00	1.3 miles
Rower's Dinner	Sat	12/12			
Start of Polar Bear	Mon	12/21			

* Qualifying Swim. Must complete 2 qualifying swims + help on 3 swims each year to qualify for Golden Gate & Alcatraz.
** Requires special qualifier, details TBA
All times approximate & subject to change. TBA = to be announced

Swim Program Rules

1. Club scheduled swims are restricted to Club members, who are current on their dues and fees and in good standing.
2. Swimmers must have current USMS membership, and abide by each organization's rules and requirements.
3. Swimmers are required to wear orange caps on all scheduled swims.
4. Swimmers cannot use swim aids, including fins and wet suits, on any scheduled swims.
5. New members are not eligible to swim in scheduled out-of-cove swims for either 6 months from the start of their membership, or before successfully completing the 100-mile swim, the Polar Bear swim, or the Accelerated Out-of-Cove process.
6. All out-of-cove swims require a pilot:swimmer ratio of 1:3.
7. Time limits may be imposed at the discretion of the Swim Commissioner(s).
8. All Club boats are reserved for scheduled swims. Co-pilots are encouraged. Riders are prohibited.
9. Swimmers must register during check-in and attend the swim briefing in order to swim.
10. Swimmers must successfully complete at least two qualifying swims and help on at least three swims to qualify for Alcatraz and Golden Gate Swims.
11. Out-of-town members must have successfully completed two of the last three Club scheduled Alcatraz and/or Golden Gate swims or meet Rule 10 above.

(Nothing in the above rules shall contravene any applicable Federal laws and statutes.)